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ROOTS OF CHANGE

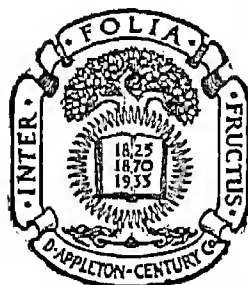
By

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WITH A FOREWORD BY
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"The Catholic World"*



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PARENTIBVS MEIS

PREFACE.

FOR EVERY THOUSAND PERSONS WHO ARE INFLUENCED by their own age, and shaped according to its mold, there is one person who harbors the dream of contributing his little share in reshaping the mold somewhat closer to his own ideal. It is to this one person in every thousand that I have directed the thoughts and criticisms contained in these fourteen chapters on modern social, economic, and political change. It is for this one person who feels a divine dissatisfaction with things as they are; who is determined that his own life and striving must not go down the vortex of popular and hysterical movements; who believes that he can bend ever so slightly by his own efforts the onrush of a chaotic civilization; it is for his perusal that this book has been written.

The outstanding leaders I have chosen to write about were not always influential in the right direction, but there can be no doubt about the fact that their influence counted heavily in the molding of their own time and country. Some of them, as Mandeville, Owen, Kingsley, Schurz, are hardly known to the new generation of the present day. They appeared on the stage, as it were, at periods when their peculiar bent of thought and action contrasted strongly with prevalent notions and, having given a per-

sonal impetus to the forward movement of man's universal drama, quietly disappeared from the scene.

Yet others among them, as Rousseau, Marx, Leo XIII, are still in the minds and studies of present thinkers. They are men who are quoted by thousands, and whose precepts have fashioned the policies of whole nations. Their plunge into the current of contemporary thought had greater outward manifestations than that of less known men of subtle influence. No one can accurately measure such influence. We trace back the growth of an idea to the man who is at its root, but when we attempt to investigate the branches spreading out from the idea in the modern world, it is impossible to know how far they extend, where they intermingle with the offshoots of other men's ideas, where they taper off, and where they sprout afresh.

Besides the divergence, ranging from complete obscurity to world renown, in the characters of these chapters, there is also a difference in the kind of reputation they earned. Some have been notorious rather than famous. Few people would place Vincent de Paul in the same category with Thomas Paine. No one would confuse von Ketteler and Manning with Schurz and Tolstoy, nor would he expect to find Ozanam and the Webbs in agreement on any one point of their social doctrines. They had their individual paths to the task of making the world a better place to live in. Right or wrong in their objectives, correct or incorrect in their methods of attacking problems, they were none the less potent forces in molding some phase of modern living.

If I were the critical reviewer of this book instead of its writer, I should immediately ask why these characters were chosen in preference to dozens of others who were

very important and in some cases more prominent. The only answer to this question is, perhaps, no answer at all. It lies in the fact that no two men see personalities in quite the same light. What one considers important another will deem insignificant; what I have interpreted as a good point in Karl Marx will be utterly condemned and condemned by the ultra-conservative reactionary; what I have seen as praiseworthy in Ozanam will be scoffed at by the modern Marxist.

Undoubtedly there are others among the social, economic, and political leaders of the past five hundred years who deserve an equal place with the radical characters described in these pages. But it is the personality as well as the teaching of the man that I wished immediately to stress. And the reason for this is not my desire to forestall criticisms such as I myself would make of a work of this kind, nor is it that I make any pretensions of having offered a complete picture of the principal thinkers in these fields. Only a work of encyclopedic proportions could do that. Men I should like to have included for various reasons are Malthus, Comte, Bakunin, Veblen, Tawney, Penty, and Pius XI. There are many others, but these, because of their personalities and their methods of approaching the problems of the age, should well suit the purpose of these pages.

Regarding that purpose, it is worth noting that the man who is sufficiently different from the thousand others to hope to influence them in some way is usually a man with ideas of his own. What he can get from a study of the people herein discussed is not so much a technique as it is an ideal. It was well within the possibility of such men to remodel a tragically imperfect world, and it is well

within the possibility of the man who dares to think and act according to well-founded convictions to help in removing a large amount of the tragedy and to smooth out the depressive effects of imperfection. All of this is dependent upon ideals and inspiration, qualities without which the world grows dull and gray. The molders of men entertain a Messianic hope of removing the dullness and grayness from the lives of their contemporaries. Perhaps *one in a thousand* is putting the estimate too high.

The chapters entitled "Manning's Cardinal Principle," "Leo and Labor," and "Social Philosophy of the Webbs" have appeared in *The Catholic World*. The editor has graciously permitted their revision and publication here. I am under similar obligation to the editors of *The Commonwealth* for permission to use that part of the chapter on "Marx, Man, and Machinery," which appeared in their pages.

J.H.F.

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FOREWORD

SINCE HIGH-SCHOOL DAYS I HAVE FELT GRATITUDE FOR A professor of history who taught us students what he called the "topical method." He would select some great central fact and demonstrate, or ask us to discover if we could, how many other facts radiated from it or converged upon it. We were made to understand that there was a logical as well as a chronological connection between one historical event and another. Under the guidance of that wise teacher history appeared to be not a parade in which one thing merely succeeded another in accordance with an arbitrary schedule, but rather, as it were, the revolution of planets flung far off from a central sun and revolving around it. Sometimes instead of a fact we would select a person, Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and consider what events prepared the way for him, and what other events came as a consequence of his career.

Studying in this way, we were saved from the common temptation of looking upon history as a miscellaneous and tedious accumulation of names, dates, facts; or as an ever-recurring sequence of the three great scourges, war, famine, pestilence; or as a fatalistic working out of social and economic forces.

In this interesting volume Father Fichter has followed some such wise schema as that of my old professor. He has

taken fourteen men and one woman of importance in the history of the relationship—or, as Karl Marx would have it, the conflict—between the classes of society, and he has grouped in and around their biographies virtually all that is essential to the social problems of the last three hundred years. I can imagine no pleasanter way for the student or the casual reader to absorb information, and no more alluring introduction to the study of social justice. Years ago economics used to be called “the dreary science,” and sociology seemed dry as dust and hard as bones. But recently, thanks to the Great Depression, we have all perforce learned a good deal about social and economic facts and forces. But like other information obtained from haphazard conversations, or picked out of the air *via* radio, or even acquired with conscientious effort in study-clubs and forums, our opinions and judgments in the matter of social justice are badly jumbled and disorganized in the brain.

Father Fichter, in *Roots of Change*, does for the reading public at large what my preceptor of early days did for us neophytes. He puts order and sense and logic into what would otherwise remain mere bits and scraps, odds and ends of knowledge. He compels social history to appear as a sequence of logically related facts, not as a mad tumult of what Anatole France called a “*univers enragé*.”

For another reason also I am confident that this pleasant and profitable volume will be enthusiastically received. Publishers tell us that of all classes of writing, fiction apart, biography appeals nowadays most strongly to the general public. Naturally so, for “the proper study of mankind is man.” Only a few great philosophers with a strong predilection for metaphysics really care for abstract thought. Philosophy, and in particular that branch of philosophy

MODERN SOCIAL WORKER

Vincent de Paul (c. 1581-1660)

THE MOST COMMON ERROR IN THE MINDS OF MODERN social workers is the thought that they are the pioneers of a new movement, or at least the immediate successors of those who broke new ground. The heritages of the past are a bagatelle when compared with the accomplishments of the present. Of course, there is much that can be pridefully commented upon in the excellent and efficient methods of our professional social worker; but if we are seeking the pioneers of modern welfare methods we must transcend the enthusiasm of Mary Richmond's pupils and look into the life and work of a humble priest of seventeenth-century France. That priestly social innovator is Vincent de Paul.

Social and economic conditions in France at the time of his birth and all during his life formed a peculiarly fertile field for the acceptance of exactly the contributions Vincent de Paul could make. He lived to offer these contributions and to fashion his fame in one of the most importantly tragic epochs of European history. Treaties to end the Religious wars were broken, carefully remade, and broken again. Plague swept the country in 1586, killing thirty

thousand persons in Paris alone. As Henri Lavedan wrote, "Three quarters of France was uncultivated and in a state of desolation, abandoned by the peasants, plowed only by war and fertilized by the dead."¹ The national distress into which De Paul was born continued in kind, if not in degree, until his death in 1660.

The sixty years of his priestly career passed in an age of contradictory characters. Men were then either great sinners or great saints; they sold themselves completely either to God or to the devil, and scorned to compromise on middling virtue or tepid vice. The Reformation was in full swing as person after person appeared on the scene, played his personal part brilliantly, and departed suddenly. Henry IV abjured Protestantism, married Marie de Medici, and was assassinated. Richelieu rose to power, completed the absolutism that had been begun under the Capetians, found France a place among the nations; and finally, "died as he had lived, without scruples and without delicacies of conscience, absorbed by his great aim and but little concerned about the means he had employed to arrive at it."² Other brilliant names of the age are Louis XIII, Anne of Austria, Louis XIV, Mazarin, Francis de Sales, Corneille, Balzac, and a long litany of lesser lights.

The early years of Vincent de Paul contain the germs of a romantic biography, and some of his hagiographers took advantage of that fact to surround his memory with a tissue of fictions and fables. His birthdate, which is not definitely known, has been placed anywhere between 1576 and 1581; he himself seems to indicate the later year as

¹ Henri Lavedan, *The Heroic Life of St. Vincent de Paul*, New York (1929), Longmans, Green, p. 22.

² M. Guizot, *France*. New York (1808). Peter Fénelon Collier Vol. IV

the correct one. Born of a peasant family in southern France, he knew the soil as only a farmer can. After his ordination, and five years of further study, he was captured by Turkish pirates, taken to Tunis, and offered for sale in the open slave market. From his master, an aged and kindly alchemist, he learned his lessons in "Preventive Medicine," picking up details of a therapeutic skill which was to prove most handy in his later social work among the sick poor.

When the old man died, Vincent became the chattel of his son, a renegade Christian, who had to be reconverted to Christianity before De Paul could make good his escape. The ex-slave then went to Rome, continued his studies, and achieved what would in these days be the equivalent of a Doctor of Philosophy's knowledge. In the light of his times, Vincent was a well-educated and fully formed priest, a fact worthy of note in any man whose contemporaries in the priesthood were poorly trained and sometimes fatuously ignorant. In 1609 he returned to France on a secret mission to the King, and then for a decade busied himself with the ordinary duties of the parish priest. It was not until 1619, when he was made Royal Almoner to the galley-slaves in Paris, that he can be said to have started his program of social reformation.

It is on the basis of the work done during the remainder of his life that Vincent de Paul has ranked as the greatest social worker of all times, and as the first social worker in the sense in which the term is understood to-day. Whether or not the superlatives have been rightly applied matters little. At all events, only a muddle-headed historian would question the worthwhile contributions he made to the theory and practice of organized welfare-work.

As a matter of sober history, however, we can discover nowhere an elaborate, detailed plan worked out by De Paul for his social reform. Except for what he had learned in ethical studies and through the trial and error method of practical experience, he had not delved into any complex investigation of society, social forces, and social processes. I doubt very much that he was overcareful in scrutinizing existing conditions or comparing and contrasting them with some fanciful scheme of society that he may have evolved for himself. He was a practical man who saw the immediate necessity for definite remedies in definite circumstances, and he allowed the method and means to shape themselves as the problems presented themselves.

According to the dictates of modern textbooks, it seems that we would have to know a fully elaborated science of sociology before we can instruct a social worker to put that science into practice. For social work, or social service, is nothing more nor less than the practical application of sociological principles in the relief of the poor, the sick, the handicapped, the defective, and the delinquent. In observing the enthusiasm of modern social workers, one wonders how it was possible for the Church to carry on through many centuries some of the greatest social institutions the world has ever seen without the aid and abetment of a scientific sociology. How could John Vianney, Joseph Cottolengo, Pierre Eymard, John Bosco, Vincent de Paul, and the rest of the army of Catholic social workers carry on in the face of such a lacuna? Perhaps, after all, there is more than mere religiosity in the "supernatural sociology" of which Paul Furfey frequently speaks.

In his splendid book, *Fire on the Earth*, Father Fur-

fey says that Catholic social action has become a rather efficient system. "We have our organizations, local and national. We have our press with an effective corps of writers. Eloquent speakers defend our theories on the platform or over the radio. We pass resolutions condemning social injustice, and we apply pressure to politicians to make them favor our views."³ As far as the bounds of communication allowed, all of these means were employed three hundred years ago by Vincent de Paul. He had local and national organizations that eventually became worldwide. He made excellent use of the press and the platform, passed resolutions condemning the social abuses of his time, and counted on his influence with Richelieu and Louis XIII for the success of particular reforms.

As for the five classes of people who need the services of the social case worker, I think it easy to show that Vincent de Paul treated them all from an attitude that was at once scientific and supernatural. First, in the relief of the poor he recognized and remedied the same problem that moderns have attacked through the use of "scientific case work." He saw that there could be much waste and duplication in the giving of private alms, and that often enough the poor were not really helped in an effective, lasting manner by spontaneous private charity. He saw that study of individual cases was necessary; that training and organization on a large scale would bring about the only lasting remedy; that assisting the poor is not a mere matter of giving money and food for the relief of an immediate need; that it requires a study of the causes from which each individual need arises, and an application of means to prevent a recurrence of distress.

³ Paul Furfey, *Fire on the Earth*, New York (1936), Macmillan, p. 12.

Again, in the handling of the sick, De Paul insisted, as far as he could in those days, on a rational method that was prophylactic as well as curative. It was never merely a matter of finding bed and board for the sick person over a short period, and then setting him adrift in an atmosphere that was physically unwholesome. His establishment of hospitals and organization of a company of nursing sisters were the invaluable means he employed for the permanent relief of the sick.

The physically handicapped and mentally deficient, as well as the delinquent, were benefited in a variety of ways by Vincent de Paul and his capable followers. The task they set for themselves in this regard was an enormous one for it meant a direct attack upon the famous Beggar State of the French capital. Cripples, morons, and criminals organized themselves into corporations that lived outside the law and in defiance of it. During the reign of Louis XIV forty thousand beggars were so organized in Paris alone. Most of them had recourse to the deceptions of the notorious *Cour des Miracles* where they nightly underwent complete changes—"humps dropped off, arms and legs reappeared and ulcers vanished." As Abbé Maynard described them, "They were literally a people without a God or a king, without laws human or divine, without creed or morals; knowing neither marriage, nor Baptism, nor sacraments; bound to the Church, the State and society solely by incessant warfare." Under the inspiration and leadership of Vincent de Paul there was initiated a system of relief organizations which was gradually enabled to meet and combat these conditions.

The problem of mendicity and relief that seems ever destined to raise its ugly head in times of financial depression appeared to be a permanent adjunct of seventeenth-century France. Besides the hordes of voluntary beggars who filled the streets, there were many transients forced to find refuge in Paris because of the distress occasioned by the Thirty Years War. From all ends of the country they trudged in legions to the capital. The government attempted to handle the matter in a high-handed manner by prohibiting begging and by incarcerating offenders. Some provisions were made for various classes of beggars, but they were either insufficient or poorly planned. At any rate they failed. Citizens were forbidden, under penalty of prosecution, to give alms in the streets or hospitals or to afford lodgings to vagabonds. Men who begged in the face of this prohibition were whipped and sent to the galleys; women were whipped and had their heads shaved.

As usual, when laws and methods of enforcement are oversevere, there was a tendency in subjects of the law to swing to the opposite extremes of violation. De Paul watched the government fail in its attempt to rid the streets of mendicants. The hungry poor were going from beggary to banditry. Thoughtless but sincere city officials were losing their hold. He decided to take a hand in the solution of the problem. "Faithful to his usual tactics," writes Pierre Coste, "he proceeded slowly, continuously and perseveringly. At first he made a very modest attempt, and then went forward as far as Providence and the resources at his command allowed."⁴

It seemed to the young curé that the hand of God was

⁴ Pierre Coste, *Life and Labours of St. Vincent de Paul*, London (1934), Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, Vol. II, p. 284. This is by far the best work available in the English language on De Paul.

intervening when a friend gave him 100,000 livres to expend on any good work he chose. He bought a hospice and decided to start on a small scale, making a careful selection of its first forty inmates, and consulting with people of experience and means. Mademoiselle Le Gras, who was De Paul's foremost consultant, agreed that the first group of inmates ought to include men and women capable of teaching the others some trades or crafts that would help to defray expenses and give the unfortunates an ability for future self-maintenance. Soon there were a number of skilled silk-weavers, cloth-weavers, serge-makers, shoe-makers, glove-makers, seamstresses and pin-makers. The hospice was administered by a council of three, consisting of a priest and two laymen, and the success that attended it was almost instantaneous.

Thus was started an institution that could, in its multiplication, solve the whole problem of mendicancy. It proved that De Paul was more than a warm-hearted philanthropist in his dealings with social problems; and, on the other hand, that he was more than a mere scientific case worker. The conduct and condition of the erstwhile beggars whom his work benefited are the measure of its successful functioning. "A marvelous peace and unity reigned there," says Abelly, "grumbling and backbiting were banished with other vices. The poor busied themselves at their little employments and acquitted themselves of all the religious duties appropriate to their state. It was, in fine, a little replica of the life of the early Christians."⁵ A picture that is indeed in keeping with the product we would expect from a sociologist with a supernatural point of view.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

Proceeding from this small beginning in behalf of the beggars, De Paul gradually built up and extended his work. At first he was almost overwhelmed by the importunate zeal of the Ladies of Charity, a group of aristocratic workers he had formed, who, with full feminine enthusiasm, wished him to plunge immediately into a program that would include all the beggars in Paris. In his own sane way, De Paul went about the increase of his facilities by trying out a large-scale institution of two hundred people at La Salpêtrière. His own words were, "Let us just make an attempt at first, let us be satisfied with admitting one or two hundred poor people; let us accept only those who come of their own accord; let us not force anybody; such persons being well treated and quite content, will attract others, and so, little by little, the numbers will increase with the resources Providence will send. Nothing will be spoiled by acting in this way; haste and force are, on the contrary, hindrances to God's designs. If the work is from Him, it will succeed and last; if not, it will simply vegetate and perish."⁶

The enlarged hospice had hardly got under way when Parliament published an edict forbidding all begging in public places in the city, and commanding "all poor mendicants, able-bodied or otherwise, of all ages and of both sexes, to appear, from Monday, May 7, at eight o'clock of the morning until the thirteenth day of the said month inclusive, in the courtyard of Our Lady of Pity . . . to be despatched by the directors to the houses dependent on the General Hospital."⁷ De Paul saw this as the voice of authority; he had in fact, been consulted in the drafting

⁶ Louis Abelly, *La vie du vénérable serviteur de Dieu Vincent de Paul*, Paris (1664), F. Lambert, p. 214. Quoted by Coste.

⁷ Coste, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 300.

of the edict, and undoubtedly foresaw the beneficent results that would obtain when the power of the state was at hand to lend prestige to his work.

The edict had an almost magical effect. When the beggars began to arrive at the assigned place, they found a company of archers, the equivalent to modern detectives, on the spot, watching to exclude or apprehend criminals. When word of this arrangement spread through the underworld, only about five thousand of the forty thousand beggars who used to roam the streets of Paris complied with the decree. Many fled to the provinces, and some even resigned themselves to the necessity of honest manual labor. As Coste naïvely remarks, "There were thousands of sudden cures; the blind recovered their sight; the maimed and crippled the use of their limbs; the paralyzed their power of movement. Never did medicine effect so many and such rapid cures as the decree of the Parliament."⁸

Although this method was the obvious one in dealing with so serious a problem, and the results of it were greatly beneficial to all people concerned, not every one was satisfied. After seeking for security all their lives, men are sometimes bored to distraction when they finally reach security; and the case was no different in the Paris hospices. It reminds me of the man to whom the weekly relief check has become monotonous. Sometimes he has to wait in line for a half hour before he receives it. And that breaks up his week!

Despite this attitude on the part of some, and despite formidable obstacles placed in the way of the new system, De Paul's plan succeeded admirably. The fact that the

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 300.

inmates were given some trade to learn, some work to keep them interested—a policy which seems most ordinary and logical in modern eyes—undoubtedly made for its smooth operation. Years before he attacked the problem there were houses of charity in Paris, but no one had the common sense to put the inmates to work. A young man who had been taken from one of the early hospices to learn the trade of a Parisian craftsman had lost completely all inclination to work. As he expressed it, “I was three years in the hospice doing nothing, and now I am not going to start working.” All this changed in the plan of Vincent de Paul, and now, even three centuries later, we moderns are at times guilty of the unwisdom of not following his exemplary principles.

In the care of the delinquent, De Paul was again far ahead of his times, and here, too, he spread the seed which grew up many years later in systematic prison reform. There were three kinds of people held in detention; the first two were for the most part criminals; they were the ordinary prisoners and the galley-slaves. The third type comprised the slaves captured and held for ransom by the “unspeakable Turk,” through whose hand De Paul himself had been incarcerated for over a year. With a true sense of the supernatural obligations resting in him as a priest and welfare worker, he made no distinction between one class of unfortunates and another. Ultimately, of course, he was on the trail of their souls, that he might ask them to the following of his Master, but in the meanwhile he saw with Aquinas that a decently comfortable body is needed before a man turns his soul to God.

In his experiences in the hospitals and poorhouses of

ASAFIA STADI

Paris, Vincent de Paul had not yet plumbed the depths of human suffering. He had been a slave of the Turk, but he had not been associated with unfortunate wretches confined to the galleys and prisons because of their crimes. So it was that he came upon a whole new world of horrors when he obtained permission through his friend Monsieur de Gondi to visit the convicts in their dirty holes of detention. The shock of a first short visit shook him into a plan of action.

He went straight to De Gondi and recalled to him that these prisoners were directly under the latter's authority. "As you are their master on earth," he told him, "so will you be held responsible for them before God. I do not deny that they have merited punishment, but human charity and your own integrity demand that they should not be left in their present abandoned state, helpless, hopeless. Have pity upon them." But it was not only pity he wanted for these unfortunate creatures. As a true Christian social worker he knew that justice must be practised, but that above justice there is the constant and universal law of charity.

Occasionally the whims of people make "slumming" or "slum-parties" the fashion of the day. When Vincent de Paul installed some prisoners under wholesome conditions in the Faubourg St. Honoré, it became the mode of the moment to form slum-parties and visit the novel house of detention. The morbid interest aroused by these curious people had its good effects in unexpected ways. Money was offered to him, and episcopal as well as government support was thrust upon him for the furtherance of the movement.

In 1619, Louis XIII conferred upon him "the office

of Royal Almoner, with a stipend of six hundred livres a year and with the same rights and honors enjoyed by the other officers of the Navy of the East. His Majesty commands that the aforesaid De Paul in the aforesaid Royal office should henceforth be given rank and precedence over all other almoners of the aforesaid galleys." This edict making him the Chaplain General of the Galleys put De Paul in an official position from which he could use his authority in alleviating the prisoners' distress. His own investigations, and the inquiries of members in the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, made it clear that the prisoners were in dire need of everything, "in particular of the succors of religion."

It was the custom then to send all convicts sentenced to the galleys to Paris until a sufficient number was gathered. Every six months or so they would be chained together and marched to Marseilles, while the prisons in Paris were gradually refilled with new convicts. The abuses they suffered in all stages of their captivity harmed them both spiritually and materially, and it was to the relief of the *whole* man that Vincent de Paul and his helpers looked. The priests of St. Lazare and the Company of the Blessed Sacrament aided him in checking particular and general needs of the men, and in providing remedies for them.

First, the sick, who had previously been treated no differently than those in good health, were segregated from the rest and nursed back to health. The Daughters of Charity, a community founded by De Paul, had much to do with this first renovation, and also with the general cleanliness of the prisons. Previously the jails were little better than stables. Now they were at least habitable. An-

other important abuse corrected by the vigilance of the new social workers was the carelessness of prison book-keepers who neglected to write down the name of the criminal and the extent of his sentence; hence the period of his detention depended mainly on the caprice of prison officials.

Coste tells of the part played by the Daughters of Charity. "The few days that elapsed between the departure of one group of galley-slaves and the arrival of another were not days of rest for the Sisters; on the contrary, the work was harder than ever, for bedding had to be renewed, the main hall washed and scrubbed, and order restored throughout the prison. It was Saint Vincent's wish that they should not only be the servants but the angel guardians of the convicts."⁹ They had a special set of rules to follow, and it is interesting to note that it was detailed in corporal as well as spiritual matters. The Sisters were to be kindly and gentle at all times, using persuasion and charm in order to put the unfortunate men in a better mental state.

The *whole* man was cared for in the system of reform inaugurated by De Paul and carried out by the Daughters of Charity. Food and linen and medicine took care of his bodily wants; delving into the causes of his delinquency led to their eradication, and frequently enough to the spiritual conversion and mental rehabilitation of individuals. The extension of these methods to other parts of France assured their success and offered to all future social-minded men a plan for the revitalization of criminals. Henri Lavedan makes the sweeping assertion that "Of all that has been accomplished since his day in philanthropy and in

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

the amelioration of the lot of suffering humanity, Vincent de Paul was the creator.”¹⁰

* * *

Another appalling situation that was apparent to any one having his eyes open to the social needs of the age was the problem of abandoned babies. The causes for the abandonment of these infants were several, but the two main ones were the poverty of their parents and, in some cases, the culpable negligence of the civil power. Not having the time nor the ability to uproot the fundamental causes, De Paul did the next best thing in inaugurating a remedy for individual immediate cases.

Up to that time, at least from 1570, when the Chapter of Paris decided to act in the matter of foundlings, the children had been brought to *La Couche*, where they were put under the care of four slatternly women hired for that purpose. The income of the institution was uncertain, the city officials, after the first flare of enthusiasm, contributed very little, and the whole work reached such a condition that it was little better than leaving the children on the streets to die. Mothers continued to abandon their children in such numbers that several hundred were received each year at *La Couche*. Many of them were on the verge of death when picked up in the city streets and alleys, and of the remaining, only a handful ever grew to maturity.

De Paul studied the problem at the foundling asylum and noted that these abandoned waifs were badly looked after; that there was only one nurse for every four or five children. They were sold at a current market price of eight *sols* apiece to beggars who sometimes broke their arms and

¹⁰ Lavedan, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

legs so that their pitiable state would move passers-by to give a few coppers; if sickly in body or unsuccessful in begging, they were allowed to die of hunger; they were doped with opium to put them to sleep and to make them appear slightly idiotic. Finally, they were allowed to go astray without religious education of any kind, and in most cases died without the benefit of Baptism.

The women in charge of the public asylum were not averse to the traffic in youngsters; in fact they profited by it, and in a short while buying and selling became a recognized large business. Occasionally infants were adopted into the homes of good and upright people, but, for the most part, they drifted into the hands of beggars, prostitutes, and thieves.

Vincent de Paul influenced his assistants, the Ladies of Charity, particularly Louise de Marillac, to help him in recovering the foundlings. They started modestly, feeling their way and making sure that what they did would have permanent effects. Twelve children, drawn by lot, were purchased and put under the care of the Daughters of Charity in a special house rented for the purpose. After two years of gradual growth, filled with difficulties, experiments, and changes, De Paul decided that the time had come to take over the entire work. He called a meeting of the Ladies of Charity, gave them his proposals, answered objections, and submitted a plan of stable organization. He insisted with them that "The only remedy is to do all that we can," and that seemed to be sufficient. Shortly after his proposals were put into force, there were four thousand children in the asylums of De Paul.

As happens in the biographies of all popular men, there have been cited many imaginary instances of Vincent de

Paul's wondrous doings. Washington probably never touched ax to a cherry tree, and certainly St. Denis never walked into Paris with his head in his hands. The stories about Vincent are as little authenticated. Omitting the more bizarre details, however, there is nothing incongruous in the stories told of "how he often went out at night, even in winter, heedless of frost and snow, seeking through the worst quarters of the city for abandoned babies, pressing them to his heart the better to warm them and carrying back those whom he had found to the Daughters of Charity." Whether or not this or that story of De Paul is true matters little. That he had a deep personal interest in each of his charges is well attested in authentic documents such as his correspondence with Louise de Marillac, his conferences to the Ladies and Daughters of Charity, and the regulations he drew up for the Sisters in charge of the infants.

Vincent de Paul was unlike your ultra-modern social worker in that he saw the supernatural through the natural, the soul through the body. The natural charity of a religious neutrality had no place in his scheme of things. Either he was performing his labors for the love of God or he was not performing them at all. Merely taking the children off the streets was only the beginning of his plan for them. They were given spiritual instruction and character training; the boys were taught to read and write, the girls at least to read. All took up some kind of handiwork, the boys knitting and the girls lacemaking, and when they grew older they were enabled to learn a trade or profession.

If the scope of Vincent de Paul's social work had been confined to the urban centers, it would still form the subject of an amazing career. But the fact is that he spent practically as much time and energy in behalf of the rural population as he did for the poor of the big cities. He started first from the spiritual side, giving missions in the provinces, and then sending priests out for the same purpose, and finally organizing the Congregation of the Missions, now popularly known as the Vincentians. This work, as all the others in which he had a hand, was designed primarily for the assistance of the neglected poor, and each of the missions was marked by the priests' visit to the poor and the sick, and by the establishment of local Confraternities of charity.

It is important to note that De Paul regarded the corporal works of mercy as inseparable from the spiritual. He insisted always that both the spiritual and the material needs of the poor be attended by his followers, and in both cases he advised that prevention was even better than cure. His oft-repeated words were, "A doctor who preserves a man from sickness deserves more than he who cures him."

So, in going to the relief of the provinces of Lorraine, Picardy, and Champagne during the distress of the Thirty Years' War, he was convinced that supernatural means would have been ineffectual unless accompanied or followed by natural ones. As Coste so aptly remarks, he "was not one of those mystics who, with eyes raised to Heaven, are satisfied with saying, 'Act, O my God, I have confidence in Thee'; he was well aware of the truth that if we are right to rely on the Almighty, the Almighty also relies

on us.”¹¹ He was face to face with a mass of physical misery that has seldom been paralleled in the history of man.

Men and women were hungry enough to root like the animals for acorns and whatever vegetables might have been left rotting in the fields. Parts of France were a veritable crossroads of the War, through which mercenary soldiers passed and repassed so frequently that hardly an acre could be cultivated. And the moral ruin left in the wake of the marching armies was probably worse than the physical sufferings the people underwent.

Vincent went directly to Richelieu and implored him to make peace with the enemies, but the Cardinal could do nothing. Then he organized his priests, and through them put into effect a gigantic relief administration, obtaining the necessary funds through the Ladies of Charity and other high personages. When funds ran short he hit upon the plan of printing and distributing the accounts sent to him from the priests and sisters in the desolated regions, and finally of using the press in publishing a periodical entitled, *Le Magasin Charitable*. Here was a man who knew the worth of our modern methods of propaganda, and the success with which he met is the greater proof that his schemes are imitable by moderns.

For his day and age, the methods of De Paul were considered bold innovations; they were ingenious plans of campaign, but they had the further attraction that they worked out in practice. There was, for instance, his establishment of a series of soup kitchens, *potages économiques*, in the most needy sections of the country, the use of which is a commonplace at the present time.

¹¹ Coste, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

Through his assistants at rural depots he distributed seeds to the farmers when the worst of the war had passed, and showed them ways of rehabilitating their land. He superintended the creation of workshops where the underprivileged could learn a trade and thus earn their livelihood. And in all this he advised the kind of careful check-up so dear to the heart of card-index sociologists; he asked that income and disbursements should be carefully noted, and that wherever possible the kind of relief as well as the number and nature of individual cases should be accounted for.

As an example of the painstaking method Vincent used in relief organization, there is still extant a manuscript of a set of instructions given his deputies in the provinces. Arriving in a new locality, they were first to pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, then consult with the parish priest in drawing up a list of the poor and unfortunate, beginning with the most needy who could not earn a living. This list was to be modified after investigation of individual cases, and so arranged that an equitable distribution should take place influenced by no special favors or recommendations. Next the amount of food, the kind of medicine, the suggestions as to work or occupation, all were noted, and acted upon so that the utmost might be obtained in the spread of relief.

It is recorded that at Nancy five hundred people were fed every day; at St. Mihiel at one time, eleven hundred and thirty-two. In Paris, during the War, his soup kitchens sometimes fed between fifteen and sixteen thousand persons daily. In the province of Lorraine alone the relief given in money and commodities was estimated at about eight million livres over a period of ten years (1639-

1649). The result of one man's inspiration and leadership is truly staggering.

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Lavedan says that De Paul "was a born executive, one who could direct anything, a person, an entire city, a human conscience, whether that of a queen or of a criminal."¹² However, most men of executive ability are measured by the use to which they put this ability, and by the permanence of the institutions which they founded. What their contribution to the improvement of society is depends to a large extent on whether their work lasted well after their deaths, or died with them. In the case of De Paul, the modern continuance of institutions and methods he inaugurated is proof positive of his worth as a social worker and reformer.

The first of his organizations (1618) is the Confraternity of Charity which spread widely for many years, suffered a decline for a while, and was later reinvigorated through the efforts of Frederick Ozanam in the last century. It is now known as the Vincent de Paul Society, and any experienced social case-worker will tell you that it is the best means yet devised for the unobtrusive assistance of the worthy poor.

Another permanent and highly successful organization instituted by Vincent de Paul is the Congregation of the Missions, known also as the Vincentians, Lazarists, and Paules. In 1626 the Archbishop of Paris gave his approval to De Paul and his first companions "to live in a community or confraternity and to devote themselves to the salvation of the poor country people." From that day to

¹² Lavedan, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

this the followers of Vincent de Paul have continuously striven for the ideal of their founder. The Congregation spread throughout the world, and at the present time its members are still applying spiritual and material means to complex social problems, means that were effective three centuries ago. They follow the dictates of worldly prudence in the use of well-tested, scientific, and modern methods of social alleviation, and superimpose upon these a teaching of the facts of revelation, the knowledge of the final end towards which all human endeavor must be directed. In asking the Sovereign Pontiff to establish the Patronage of St. Vincent in 1883, the Bishops of France thus praised their work, "The Priests of the Congregation of the Mission whom he founded, faithfully walking in the footsteps of their Father, in the sentiments of humility and Christian simplicity, continue to apply their zeal to the evangelization of the poor, and to the direction of associations of charity."¹³

The third organization to survive the vicissitudes of the years was the Company of Daughters of Charity. De Paul had given guidance in charitable work to groups of women in many parishes of France; he had directed, at least in broad outline, the enterprises of ladies of fashion who were moved to pity for the weak and unfortunate. These society women sometimes visited sick and needy persons in prison, but since they were practically helpless in performing any immediate work of comfort, they usually brought their maid-servants to administer to the prisoners. Gradually, even during the first year, they ceased making personal visits, but continued to send servants in their

¹³ J. B. Boudignon, *St. Vincent de Paul*, St. Louis (1925), Vincentian Press, p. 332.

place. From these latter women, mostly of peasant origin, sprang the sisterhood which has since become a potent factor in social service throughout the world.

The Daughters of Charity owe their beginning to the failure of their aristocratic mistresses to render personal service to the sick and needy. The latter had discovered the work, and had actually continued to give invaluable financial aid, but they failed to sustain difficulties that naturally accompany personal efforts in behalf of the unfortunate. The Company of Daughters of Charity came into existence in 1633 through the efforts of Louise de Marillac, and under the direct guidance of Vincent de Paul.

Because of their outstanding zeal and perpetual industry on behalf of the poor, not even the highest form of praise would be an exaggeration of the good performed by these sisters. They are familiarly and lovingly known as the "Geese of God" on account of the widespread *cornette* they have worn for more than a century. But the sisterhood is most remarkable in that it was an innovation to permit nuns to go about freely in the streets and enter the homes of their patients. De Paul used to tell them, "Your monasteries are the houses of the sick; your cell, a hired room; your chapel, the parish church; your cloister, the streets of the city; your enclosure, obedience; your grille, the fear of God; your veil, holy modesty."

All these great works of Vincent de Paul seem ordinary and necessary to modern accomplished social workers, but they were at that time quite out of the ordinary. As Lavedan puts it, "All the great fundamental ideas, not merely of his own foundations but of the various organi-

zations which have been conducted under other than religious auspices for the last two centuries, were furnished by him. Since better models did not exist, there was nothing to do but copy his.”¹⁴ It is a wholesome thought for us to remember that De Paul, through a combination of prayer and work, experience and ability, supernatural and natural means, reached conclusions in the seventeenth century that are regarded as fresh discoveries in the twentieth.

In the opinion of men the reputation of a social reformer stands or falls with the permanence of his work. From this natural point of view alone it is necessary to admit that De Paul was the first social worker of modern times. The social agencies of our own times are but an extension of his principles and methods.

¹⁴ Lavedan, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

ROOT OF ECONOMIC LIBERALISM

Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733)

THE RATIO BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF TIMES MANDEVILLE'S *Fable of the Bees* has been quoted, especially in its subtitle, "Private Vices, Publick Benefits," and the number of times the work itself has been read, is probably more divergent than that of any other piece of literature known to man. The mere mention of Mandeville's name to any one who has ever heard it, usually elicits the remark, "He is the man who said, 'the more vicious the individual, the more prosperous the state,' isn't he?" But the discussion commonly ends there, for practically no one but a serious student of society troubles himself to read the *Fable of the Bees*, and few get beyond the paradoxical subtitle to the thought behind the work, and to an understanding of the cataclysmic results stemming from it even to the present day.

As a matter of objective record, Mandeville is to economic *laissez-faire* what Rousseau is to modern democracy; he is the root from which has grown the foul flora of liberal economics, the sperm from which has developed the omniverous fauna of modern capitalistic skulduggery. Adam Smith, through his classic *Wealth of Nations*, is

now known as the father of economic liberalism, but Adam Smith leaned heavily upon Mandeville, and wrote for an age which was widely cognizant of the *Fable's* moral. What Smith enlarged into a systematic treatise, Mandeville put down as a dogmatic interpretation of man's characteristic natural activity.

Mandeville had written that "vice nursed ingenuity," meaning that self-interest and self-love, which the custom of the world is wont to term vicious, are really the moving forces of prosperity. The trader seeking his own gain benefits the nation by importing foodstuffs which otherwise would not be procurable, and in carrying out his selfish desire he is most ingenious in devising means of making his product pleasurable to his customers; and so with all other commodities and services which tend to raise the elegant tone of society. The same thought was in the mind of Smith when he stated in the *Wealth of Nations* that self-interest is the prime economic motive. "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages."¹

Smith was intimately acquainted with the *Fable of the Bees*, and came to learn much more about its author when under the tutelage of Francis Hutcheson at Glasgow College. Hutcheson was Mandeville's severest critic, and it is surprising that his famed pupil should afterward promote the central theme of Mandeville's teaching—the theme that progress is almost entirely due to man's intrinsic selfishness. In his *Theory of the Moral Sentiments*,

¹ Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Bk. I, ch. ii.

Smith showed that he not only agreed with this theme, and its logical corollary, *laissez-faire*, but knew thoroughly the very language in which it was couched. The influence of Hutcheson was lost on the young student Adam Smith, for in discussing the moral sentiments, the latter repudiated his former teacher by disclaiming the importance of "benevolence" in actual life. Altruism is a minor factor in the conduct of affairs, according to Smith, and in every case it gives way to selfishness, for "Everyman is much more deeply interested in whatever immediately concerns himself, than in what concerns any other man." That Smith owed much to Mandeville is a historically established fact; that the *laissez-faire* doctrine of the two men is much of a muchness can easily be established by a comparison of their works.

The point I wish to make, however, does not precisely concern the part Mandeville played in the origin and development of economic theory; whether that influence is popularly known or not is of little importance; the fact is that it exists. A more interesting investigation is the study of his concept of human nature, and the reasons he had for proclaiming the course he did. The basis for all his argument is the innate viciousness of man.

Both Rousseau and Mandeville arrived at the same conclusions, but from directly opposite postulates. Both demanded complete freedom of thought and action for man, though Rousseau started with the "natural" man who is inherently good, and who requires only that checks and hindrances be removed so that his innate goodness might operate for the common weal. Mandeville likewise started with man in the state of nature; as he said, "I must desire the Reader once for all to take notice, that

when I say Men, I mean neither Jews nor Christians; but mere Man, in the State of Nature and Ignorance of the true Deity." This man is naturally a vicious character, and if he be permitted to develop his vices freely in private there will ensue a tremendous public benefit.

Mandeville could not be called a passionate advocate of freedom such as Rousseau later proved himself to be. Mandeville was ironical in his explanation of the "Grumbling Hive," and seemed to take great delight in unmasking the pretensions of men who thought themselves highly moral. It was his contention that what men called morals simply were not morals at all; they were a cloak by which one could better pursue his individual gain, or by which the functioning of public society could be better regulated. Custom has brought it about that certain ways of acting are acceptable and other ways are definitely banned by the consent of men. Thus it was merely custom that formed the norm of morality; there was no other basis.

What is normally called virtuous by men was to Mandeville nothing but a veneer thrown over the natural impulses of each individual to procure his own benefit. He identified custom with morality, adumbrating the same mistake which has endured more or less forcefully in every age of society—the confusion of manners with morals. What Mandeville meant to bring out was that conventions change so completely and so rapidly that the polite usage of his own day was vastly dissimilar to that of a century or two previous—a known truth with which there can be no quibbling. But the difference between the two is that while manners may dictate what is correct and what incorrect in social usage, morals form a point

of reference as to what is ethically right and wrong. That the manners of an age permit women to smoke cigarettes in public places—to give a well-used example—is not in the least indicative of current morals. The mistake of Mandeville was to confuse the two.

In his *Origin of Moral Virtue*, Mandeville pretends to show why the polite conventions of society, which he calls morals, were first put into general usage. "It is evident," he said, "that the first rudiments of morality, broached by skilful politicians, to render men useful to each other as well as tractable, were chiefly contrived that the ambitious might reap the more benefit from men, and govern vast numbers of them with the greater ease and security." And with this foundation laid, men quickly became more civilized because they found that they could not pounce immediately upon whatever they wanted and make it their own. They were forced to develop a more subtle approach to their fellow-men, convince them by their external attitude that public benefit was their objective, and then cunningly achieve their end by concealed and devious means. This hiding of inborn and selfish impulses was what Mandeville termed morality.

Strangely enough, it was pride and its companion, covetousness, which were the foundations for all that is moral in mankind. As the *Origin of Honor* tells us, "There were always in men the germs of morality, for they were always the slaves of pride," and this of course, is not in the least an explanation of true morality. Nor again, is there a better explanation in the *Fable* where Mandeville proclaims that the "Moral virtues are the political offspring which flattery begot on pride." He could hardly have meant it as a historical development of morality, for

he was at pains several times in subsequent writings to qualify the statement by showing that the morality of which he spoke was a slow evolution based on man's natural characteristics, and not the sudden invention of politicians.

Even these attempts to explain the erroneous conclusions he had drawn, and at the same time try to avoid denying them, were insufficient to disprove Mandeville's ethical relativism. Again and again he pointed out that there is no absolute standard of ethical conduct, but that taste and custom and manners were the bases of ethics.

Mandeville was exasperatingly calm about the evils he recognized in the world, and his thought was to change men's attitude toward them, and perceive in them the elements which tended toward the eventual betterment of society. He insisted always, as Rousseau did in the opposite trend, that he took man as he found him. There was an ideal to which the world could strive, but in doing so the world was being dreadfully hindered by the interpretation of blind moralists. According to Mandeville, man as he really is happens to be a creature vastly removed from what the moralists would have him to be, and to the charge that even if there are no virtuous people in the world there is a possibility of developing some, he shrewdly answered that "It is as possible that cats, instead of killing rats and mice, should feed them and go about the house to suckle and nurse their young ones; or that a kite should call the hens to their meat, as the cock does, and sit brooding over their chickens instead of devouring 'em; but if they should do so they would cease to be cats and kites; it is inconsistent with their natures, and the species of creatures which now we mean, when we name

cats and kites, would be extinct as soon as this could come to pass."

With this beginning there is hardly a footing on which others, who do not accept Mandeville's characterization of man, can stand and hold argument with him. If men are unfree in their actions, if they are guided only by instinct and impulse, it must be admitted that he is correct in the elaboration of his first premise. But if it is in the nature of a cat to chase and kill rats and mice, there is no parallel line of argument which will demonstrate that it is the very nature of man to act immorally toward his fellow-man. The cat follows his instinct, and though it leads him to the killing of lesser animals, it does redound to the good of himself and his dependent kittens. But a man acts freely, is guided by reason as well as by instinct—despite the fact that modern psychologists have their backs to the wall in trying to disprove this truth—and above and beyond that, he has the immutable moral law to act as a further guide.

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Perhaps the great mistake we make is to take Mandeville seriously. Considering the way in which he hedged in later years when confronted with concise refutations by William Law, Richard Fiddes, John Dennis, and a horde of able critics, it is probable that he himself was not entirely serious. He spoke of the *Fable* as a means of an hour's diversion for polite and educated persons, and not as a detailed dissertation; but the more he was attacked, the more he explained and elaborated the early ideas, until, in the end, he must have taken himself literally.

In the preface to the *Fable of the Bees*, published in 1714, when Mandeville was forty-four years old, he writes that he wishes to expose the unreasonableness and folly of people who murmur at, and exclaim against, vices which from the beginning of time have been inseparable from national prosperity. "I demonstrate," he says, "that if mankind could be cured of the failings they are naturally guilty of, they would cease to be capable of being raised into such vast, potent and polite societies, as they have been under the several great commonwealths and monarchies that have flourished since the creation."

The allegory itself, entitled, *The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turned Honest*, is very short, comprising only twenty pages in the 1732 edition. To a modern commonwealth is compared "a spacious hive stocked with bees," and in it "These insects liv'd like men, and all our actions they perform'd in small." And Mandeville proceeds to take each outstanding profession in the world of men and show how in this hive they owed their success to the individual selfishness of their practitioners. Merchants, lawyers, physicians, priests, soldiers and kings, "endeavoring to supply each other's lust and vanity," and likewise with the lesser occupations, and even with criminal activities, "all trades and places knew some cheats, no calling was without deceit." As long as the individuals were permitted to go their individual way they looked continuously to their own benefit, and in so doing balanced each other's faults, and built up a mighty nation. "Thus every part was full of vice, yet the whole mass a paradise."

But some of the bees were dissatisfied with the state of morals in their nation and decided that prosperity, if it were the result of viciousness, was certainly not worth the

price. At the gradual stamping out of personal and public vice, the hive gradually lost its greatness. Pride and luxury decreased, the navigators left the seas, the merchants gave up their manufacturing, the arts and crafts were neglected. "Content, the bane of industry, makes 'em admire their homely store, and neither seek nor covet more." The result is that the ertswile prosperity of the hive vanishes, the government collapses, and a few bees left in the hive are unable to withstand the assaults of their enemies.

Then in the appended moral to the tale, Mandeville points out that only fools would try to make a great hive into an honest hive, and wise men see that a hive "without great vices, is a vain Eutopia seated in the brain." Fraud, luxury, and pride, with all the attendant evils, must be allowed to flourish if the state is expected to prosper. "So vice is beneficial found," is the conclusion he draws from the allegory, and his contention is that what hunger is to make people eat, so vice is to make the nation great.

In a series of essays following this allegory and in which Mandeville elaborates the many paradoxes contained therein, he attempts to clarify his stand on vice as a utilitarian means to successful government. Repeatedly he insists that he does not mean to promote personal viciousness; it is merely that the qualities which men commonly term vicious are not in themselves wrong for they are inherent in the nature of man. It is not as though he were saying, "All of the good in the world is achieved by vice, therefore let us be as vicious as possible." In the first place he would not contend that it is at all necessary for a country to be prosperous. "If I have shown the way

to worldly greatness, I have always without hesitation preferr'd the road that leads to virtue."

But the exasperating part of discussing a paradoxical writer like Mandeville is the fact that he follows his own definitions in the usage of words which most people define otherwise. When he says that he prefers the road leading to virtue, one must seek into his meaning of virtue, and again a blind alley is entered. For to Mandeville, virtue, if it means anything, is simply a manner of conforming externally to the common practices of contemporary society. He writes, "When I say that societies cannot be rais'd to wealth and power, and the top of earthly glory without vices, I don't think that by so saying I bid men be vicious, anymore than I bid 'em be quarrelsome or covetous, when I affirm that the profession of the law could not be maintain'd in such numbers and splendor, if there was not abundance of too selfish and litigious people."

It was a fault of Mandeville that he could brook little opposition, and when people objected to his contradictory statements he showed the extremity to which his unreason could be pushed. He felt that the only way a completely virtuous society could be attained would be by the destruction of all signs of progress, abandonment of trade, burning of books, discontinuance of manufacturing, in short, a withdrawal into some obscure form of quietism in which all men would be virtuous because they would perform no actions at all. The charge is of course a ridiculous one, but Mandeville insists that contentment is "the bane of industry" and that unless a nation be self-seeking in its individual citizens, its ruin is inevitable.

The possibility of making "a great and honest hive"

is scouted in one of the essays following the allegory. "This perhaps might be done," he writes, "where people are contented to be poor and hardy; but if they would likewise enjoy their ease and the comforts of the world, and be at once an opulent, potent, and flourishing, as well as a warlike nation, it is utterly impossible." Always, thought Mandeville, we must remain in the realm of practice, and since men were in practice perverse, the only method of procedure is to allow their natural inclinations free rein, provided, however, that the expected prosperity ensues.

Theoretically, it seems that he allowed no norm of conduct except the purely utilitarian; if a way of living makes for the "ease and convenience" of the greatest number of people, it was for him ethically admissible. The objective to be achieved is akin to Bentham's "greatest happiness of the greatest number," and whatever in man's conduct leads to that end is to be considered "moral." Any high principle, such as honor, "is a chimera without truth or being, an invention of moralists and politicians," but this invention is, in Mandeville's mind, even a greater achievement than the invention of virtue, because "It was an improvement in the art of flattery, by which the excellency of our species is raised to such a height, that it becomes the object of our own adoration, and man is taught in good earnest to worship himself."

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Mandeville has an ingenious method of keeping to his utilitarian principle by distinguishing between harmful and beneficial vices. What he would call a harmful vice

is any action which prevents the ultimate objective of society from being attained. This to him is crime, and as such is punishable. A beneficial, or useful, vice, however, is one that should be encouraged, for though the rigorous moralist would consider it a crime, it is, according to Mandeville, in no way a criminal action. It might still be termed a vicious action, but there is nothing of evil in it; and this is the interpretation he insists upon despite the fact that he wrote in the *Fable*, "The worst of all the multitude did something for the common good."

If ever a man proclaimed the principle that "the end justifies the means," Mandeville did so with a vigor; and he was not at all modest about stating his utilitarian principle, especially when discussing government action for the common good. It was his reiterated conviction that if an evil act should be done by the government so that in its consequences it "really produces a greater quantity of good, it must, and ought to be term'd a good act."² If any one should say that a government may not commit an evil in order to obtain a greater good, he is uttering "the greatest absurdity, and a perfect contradiction in terms."

As with the state, so also with the statesman. It is not necessary that he be virtuous, honest, and noble-minded so long as he is a practical man of affairs, knowing whither the destiny of the state should tend, and being not too scrupulous in the means he chooses to further that destiny. Here, again, Mandeville demonstrates his main thesis concerning the innate evil character of all men. He admits, in the face of a storm of protest raised by the principles of the *Fable*, that if men were as solicitous for virtue, re-

² B. Mandeville, *Modest Defense of Public Stews* (1724), pp. 68-9.

ligion, and future happiness as they are for sensual pleasure, politeness, and worldly glory, "it would certainly be best, that none but men of good lives, and known ability, should have any place in the government whatever."³ But, according to him, if any one expects that this has ever been the case or shall ever happen, he "betrays great ignorance of human affairs," and seems "little to understand what he is about."

The thing that matters to Mandeville is not that Prime Ministers and other statesmen are less able or less honest than the hopes of citizens would have them, but rather that "The public administration must always go forward; it is a ship that can never lie at anchor." If it were possible to have statesmen whom moralists would term virtuous, then "The most knowing, the most virtuous, and the least self-interested ministers are the best; but in the meantime there must be ministers." Mandeville then continues by drawing the obvious parallel between statesmen and sailors by showing that if none but men who never swore and never drank were admitted to the ships the sea service would suffer greatly. If none were admitted to his Majesty's service "that had sworn above a thousand oaths, or had been drunk above ten times in their lives, I am persuaded that the sea service would suffer very much by the well meaning regulation." The ships on the sea, like the ship of state, must be manned by the best available men, but since the best are a very sorry group at anytime, there is little advantage in crying out for virtuous men.

Given the choice between a capable artful politician and a capable virtuous man, Mandeville leaves no doubt as to the one he would put at the head of the government.

³ *Ibid.*, *Fable of the Bees*, Vol. II, p. 404.

The artful man, even without extraordinary talents, will make a considerable figure in the highest post of the administration. "As to consummate statesmen," he continues, "I don't believe there ever were three persons upon earth, at the same time, that deserv'd that name." In his estimation there is not a quarter of wisdom, solid knowledge, or intrinsic worth, or a hundredth part of virtue or religion, that men talk of and compliment one another with.

Bringing Mandeville's utilitarianism down from matters of state to those of the particular citizen, it is apparent that he interprets all actions from a motive of individual self-interest. Every man thinks of himself first, even in activities in which he is genuinely striving to assist another, or in those which he is performing instinctively or from habit. People are utilitarian when they give alms to a beggar; it is not charity moving them to help a needy person, it is rather a regard for their own position in the eyes of the community, or even in order not to appear niggardly in the eyes of the mendicant himself. Again, "there would be no need of virtue or self-denial" to be moved with compassion at the sight of a wild beast attacking a helpless infant. To rescue the child would mean that we simply prefer to undergo the inconvenience of danger rather than shudder and be uneasy at a sight unpleasant to our sensibilities; and not only a man of humanity, "but likewise an highwayman, an house-breaker, or a murderer could feel anxieties on such an occasion."

These *natural* acts, done by every one whether considered a moral or a criminal person, are done for a selfish purpose; and they are neither to be praised more highly nor condemned more severely than those commonly termed immoral. They all spring from the same natural

tendencies of man, the great difference being that some are followed by an immediately palpable benefit, for instance, the rescue of a child from the jaws of an animal, whereas the so-called evil actions are followed only much later, and in a more tenuous way, by a general good to society.

In the polite society of educated people, contends Mandeville, it is the combination of pride and good sense which makes us act gently. When we manage ourselves dexterously, stifle our appetites, hide the real sentiments of our hearts before others, and in all this demonstrate the high virtue of self-conquest, we are doing nothing more than furthering our own selfish ends. "The greediness we have after the esteem of others, and the raptures we enjoy in the thoughts of being liked, and perhaps admired, are equivalents that overpay the conquest of the strongest passions, and consequently keep us at a great distance from all such words and actions that can bring shame upon us." In this way Mandeville attributes to pride the very words and actions we use in order to keep from appearing proud. He argued always that it is possible and necessary to interpret altruism and humanitarianism and every polite and humane characteristic of man, and to find at the root of it this one selfish tendency of the human race.

Mandeville was arbitrary in stating that it was a utilitarian motive, and nothing else, that moved human actions. He had no better basis for saying that man is intrinsically vice-ridden than Rousseau later had for postulating that man is essentially too good to do evil. The thought that the race had fallen from some previous higher state did not enter greatly into his considerations;

the Fall came rather when politicians and other leaders began to deceive people into thinking that there could and ought to be a norm of morality. Mandeville proclaimed himself the everlasting foe of self-deception; he wanted men to view themselves as they really are (that is, as he dogmatically asserted they are), and to discontinue masquerading under the guise of virtue. What social improvement would accrue from such an inversion of values is difficult to understand; nevertheless, he pretended that society would be in a better condition for this "honest" self-appraisal.

If the principles taught and elaborated by Mandeville had died with their author, they could have done relatively little harm, and would have exerted slight influence over future liberalism. Machiavelli, two centuries before Mandeville, preached the same tenet: that man is naturally evil and that society should be arranged according to this unidealistic postulate; and the name of Machiavelli seems to have lived while that of Mandeville has been almost forgotten. But the age in which each lived and the direction in which their respective influences tended, points to the fact that of the two, Mandeville has done more harm.

Born in Rotterdam in 1670, Mandeville was already a doctor of medicine and somewhat of a scholar when he took up residence in London just before the turn of the century. Evidently he liked the country for he married an Englishwoman, had two children of her, and remained there till his death in 1733. His first work in the English language appeared in 1703, and the *Grumbling Hive*, later to be twice expanded into the *Fable of the Bees*, in 1705. Part I of the *Fable* was published in 1714,

and Part II, four years before Mandeville's death. Other works from his pen appeared at infrequent intervals, and enjoyed a wide sale because of the notoriety of the author attained through the *Fable*.

Machiavelli is a name because of the system of political tradition he is supposed to have invented, but Mandeville is the modern proponent of a tradition that has become more and more potent while its author has gradually receded into the limbo of forgotten names. He was not merely an intellectual vogue during and after his lifetime; he was the notorious author who spread scandal concerning the usefulness of vicious habits. The clergy denounced him from the pulpit; Bishop Berkeley and John Wesley protested his wickedness, and French courts ordered that his *Fable* should be consigned to the flames. In both France and England the vogue of his works was due to his explanation of the public benefit to be derived from personal acquisitiveness, to his defense of luxury, and to the general principles which allowed utilitarianism as a sufficient basis for moral actions.

Possibly the best reason yet advanced for the later eclipse of Mandeville's name is that given by F. B. Kaye in his excellent study of the *Fable*.⁴ He opines that the general public became familiar with Mandeville's thought through the writings of Adam Smith, Helvetius, and Jeremy Bentham, all of whom were profoundly influenced by him and incorporated his ideas into systematic economies. Then, too, there was the fact that his success had been due to the scandal he created. "Generations had been trained to think of him as a sort of antichrist, and scandal

⁴ F. B. Kaye, "*The Fable of the Bees*," by Bernard Mandeville, Oxford (1924), Clarendon Press. A most thorough and competent commentary, critical, historical and explanatory.

was the normal association with the *Fable*. After a while the scandal became stale. When that happened, Mandeville's renown passed."

This remark concerns Mandeville's reputation among the class of general readers and talkers of Europe. His influence among thinkers and writers is one that never died down, and it falls mainly upon the hierarchy of economic writers who constantly advocated and furthered the principle of liberalism. From a purely literary and quasi-ethical point of view, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, and Voltaire were close students of the *Fable* and its author.

Besides bringing down the wrath of men like Bishop Berkeley, John Wesley, William Law, and others, and thus propagating his name and influence, Mandeville found a host of defenders for his liberal doctrines. They did not always agree with his terminology, but they felt that even though what he called vice was not really vice, it was nonetheless a good thing if it would produce such public benefits. The more prominent of his followers, who owed at least part of their background to him, were Bentham and Malthus, liberals; William Godwin, a political anarchist; David Hume, full-blown utilitarian; and James Mill, who strongly defended him. Others who held partially his theories were Fielding, Diderot, Holbach, Rousseau, Kant, Herder, Montesquieu, and Hazlitt; at least they gave him much attention, even though some of them took great exception to some of his teachings.

For centuries, even back to the Spartan state, moralists, philosophers, and statesmen had been teaching that the nation degenerates through luxury. Mandeville opposed that teaching and turned the whole stream of economic

and political thinking into the liberal channel. He said that it was the short-sighted wisdom of perhaps well-meaning people that robs us "of a felicity, that would flow spontaneously from the nature of every large society, if none were to divert or interrupt the stream." The value of luxury and freedom in the furtherance of social affairs became a main question of discussion among the eighteenth-century Encyclopedists. The national "felicity" or luxury took the proportions of an end in itself for Mandeville; he did not look upon it as a degenerator or impoverisher of people; but as a good thing, to be attained only through a completely *laissez-faire* policy.

The idea behind it all was that unregulated freedom among individuals would spontaneously act and react among them as a kind of "check and balance" system, and that as one selfishly strove to outdo his fellows, they, in turn, would compete with him, and the result would be public prosperity. The devastating development of this "law of the jungle" into the chaotic state of modern finance-capitalism must in the last analysis be attributed to Mandeville, and not to Smith, or Bentham, or any of their followers. The last lines of the *Fable's* moral have been the touchstone of the system:

*Bare Virtue can't make Nations live
In Splendor; they, that would revive
A Golden Age, must be as free,
For Acorns, as for Honesty.*

(i. 37)

SIGNIFICANT SAVAGE

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU WAS A SENSITIVE AND CUNNING
a savage rather than a fierce and ferocious one; but a
savage he certainly was, despite his exalted nervous sensi-
bilities and the cultural pretensions of the age in which he
lived. Perhaps it was because of these very conditions that
he must be termed a savage at all; he himself protested
that a man is a complete human if left to himself, but the
vain situations in which he finds himself, the influences of
artificial forms under which he develops, the dogmatic
dictates upon which he builds his own mental attitude, all
these tend to make him other than he is, and change him
from a noble savage to an effete member of modern
society.

Rousseau protested against all social conventions while
at the same time he tried prodigiously to emulate them
for his own advancement in society. Failing in this, he
reversed the procedure. Since he could not crash the civi-
lized world's door by using the modes of his day, he
brought that world to his door by startling it with primi-
tive boorishness and rustic artificiality. When I say he was
a savage I insist that he made himself one. In other words,

the thesis which he postulated in his *Discourse on Inequality*, he developed retrogressively in his own life. The "child of nature" which he praised so highly in that work started life as a "solitary savage, living the happy carefree life of the brute, without fixed abode, without articulate speech, with no needs or desires that cannot be satisfied through the merest instinct."¹ That, according to Rousseau, without the semblance of historical evidence, was the ideal state of the first men on earth; most of what was added to that primitive state has been harmful. The remedy, therefore, must be to return to that state of things, and to start over.

Much has been said and written of Rousseau's insincerity, of his tongue-in-cheek attitude toward the French society of his time. Many contend that he was merely cajoling his contemporaries, and hunting fame among them when he offered his explanations of the sad state of civilization, and stood ready to provide a worthwhile substitute. While a love of notoriety may have been the first motive, and a desire to startle men with his novelties a further motive for the works he produced in such lucid style, these were certainly insufficient to bring about his actual practice of the savage's life. A man may propose a thesis of living, do nothing personal about it, and be rightly condemned as insincere; but when he carries it out in his own daily life he is most certainly in earnest. Rousseau was woefully incorrect in his postulates, but he was not ultimately insincere. He may have deliberately convinced himself of his foolish plan's worth, but in the latter part of his life he acted upon that conviction.

¹ W. A. Dunning, *History of Political Theories*, New York (1926), Macmillan, p. 8.

Briefly, his metamorphosis from a denizen of society to a primitive savage—ignoble rather than noble—was this. Born in 1712, the son of a Genevan watchmaker, he received practically no formal education, experienced a period of disheartening vagabondage through France, attempted to become a man of the world in French Society, and suddenly found himself famous at the age of thirty-eight. His fame came through a prize essay for the Academy of Dijon, an unorthodox and unexpected answer to the title question: "Has the Progress of Science and Arts contributed to corrupt or purify morals?" Expanding this negative answer into a series of articles and pamphlets, he fell victim to his own theories about the "noble savage," and in uncouth and unhappy solitude put them into practice in or near the forest of Montmorency, about a dozen miles from Paris. In the last decade of his life he again became more or less a vagabond, and ended his days in a borrowed cottage at Ermenonville, in 1778, at the age of sixty-six, unlamented perhaps, but certainly not forgotten.

The fact that Rousseau was unforgotten is the reason why we must dub him "significant." The man himself would have meant little to posterity. He was an erotic wretch, diseased in mind and body, the intimate and highly imaginative details of whose eroticism are to be found in his autobiographical *Confessions*. The formal act of his conversion to Catholicism is outbalanced by the inane motive which led him to that conversion, and his almost immediate renunciation of its least principles. A depraved specimen of humanity, he is not worth a second glance, but the theories he advanced had such far-flung influence, and the style in which he couched them was so seductively

sublime, that he must be definitely included among the modern roots of revolutionary change.

Rousseau's influence on the French Revolution is admitted by every writer of history. Lord Acton placed him first among the "heralds of revolution," above men like Fénelon, Diderot and Turgot, Montesquieu and Voltaire. Belloc explains his influence by saying that "The triumph of Rousseau depended not only on the first element in persuasion, which is vision, but also on the second of the two co-related instruments by which a man may influence his fellows—to wit, style. It was his choice of French words and the order in which he arranged them, that give him his enormous ascendancy over the generation which was young when he was old." ²

Professor Hearnshaw, in a recently published work, wrote that "Rousseau, by means of his *Discours* and his *Contrat Social*, undermined the whole social system of the old régime, and prepared the way for the new democratic order by promulgating his revelation of the primitive liberty, equality, and fraternity of mankind." ³

Montesquieu and Voltaire, it is true, had a profounder and more intimate influence over the social thinkers of their day than did Rousseau, but the latter with a perfervid emotional appeal brought his doctrines within reach of the person on the streets and in the villages of France. Voltaire was an undoubted force on the French mind by the ridicule he heaped on Christianity, and Montesquieu made a mockery of monarchy through his devastating *Esprit des Lois*, but Rousseau reached the people's heart by showing

² Hilaire Belloc, *The French Revolution*, New York (1911), Henry Holt, p. 32.

³ F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *Some Great Political Idealists of the Christian Era*, London (1937), Harrap, p. 149.

them that they were the basis of sovereignty, that it was their will which constitutes the supreme authority in the state. It was a passionate insistence on this point which gave the trend toward democracy all over the world, and gave the immediate impetus to the French Revolution of 1789.

At the present moment Montesquieu, Voltaire, and the other "heralds of revolution" are, as far as modern perusal of their writings is concerned, wholly uninfluential. No one except the student and scholar wades through the voluminous writings left by them. But the current popularity of Rousseau's better-known works is a phenomenon significant of the man's universal and perennial prestige. The *Contrat Social* and the *Discours*, as well as *Émile* and *Nouvelle Héloïse*, are still regularly drawn at the public libraries of large cities, and still continue to hold an active sway over the social and political thinking of men.

The prime error in the reading habits of most men is their *blind enthusiasm* for a favorite author's writings. They are passionately devoted to some piece of literature, or to the life work of some great men—as for instance, Tolstoy was enthralled with Christ and the Sermon on the Mount—while failing to reach down to the radical principle underlying them. Dr. McGlynn ruined his whole life by not seeing the incompatibility of Henry George's first doctrine with the Catholic teaching on private ownership. So it is that the admirers of Rousseau go into raptures over his lyric prose, disregard to a great extent the contradictions and inconsistencies it sings; praise to the high heavens doctrines which gave a rapid promotion to the idea of democracy in the eighteenth century, while at the same time they miss the theme running through the whole of his literary output.

Just as Mandeville had contended that man is essentially vicious, and that that very viciousness may make for the betterment of general society, so Rousseau went to the other extreme in contending that man is essentially good, and that goodness becomes vitiated through contact with general society. That is the central theme of Rousseau: man in his natural state is good; there is an original and inborn goodness of man, which if left entirely untrammelled would be of tremendous benefit to the commonweal.

As is plainly evident, the preëstablished harmony of man in his natural state was the brain-child of Rousseau's originality, though a similar idea had been postulated by earlier English writers. If he had something like the Garden of Eden in mind when he talked of the original state of man, he took no cognizance of Original Sin and man's subsequent tendency to do evil. Whatever this first state of man was in Rousseau's concept, it is hard to tell; certainly it was nothing that falls within the history of man. Possibly it is nearer than anything else to the philosophical abstraction of man, a kind of man which never existed. In Rousseau's mind he was nothing more than a harmless and contented beast.

Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality*, then, is the work in which this seminal idea of the human savage made its first appearance. It is the work which colored and gave the basis to all his future theorizing. In it he made the mistake of describing fully, without the least evidence, the equality and harmony which existed in man's primitive condition. His elaboration of the thesis was a stubborn defiance of the opposition it had raised, as well as a smug determination to justify the enthusiasm of his admirers. At any event, he

carried the theme through all the other subjects he treated; and most of all he put it into the *Contrat Social*, a book which Belloc has called "The text of the Revolution." He was not content until he had provided for the complete remodeling of community, state, and society in general.

The point of most importance in the *Discourse on Inequality* is the evidently favorable and sympathetic attitude Rousseau took toward his synthetic savage. He portrays step by step the emergence of the primitive man from his happy and solitary life into the unhappy complexity of society, and in this portrayal evinces sorrow that the change has taken place at all. This savage fellow is idealized in every way by his literary creator. He is not the belligerent, untamed brute who lived in the warfare of all men against all their fellows, such as Hobbes depicted. Neither is he of the effeminate and tearful character which Montesquieu ascribed to his primitive creature. Rousseau insisted on happiness as the first condition of the first men, and there is no room for happiness in either bold animosity or fearful cowardice. He was a solitary, self-sufficient being, asocial rather than unsocial. Love played no part in his life. Mating meant the preservation of the species, but mating is a barnyard thing, as casual as that of the animal.

"In this primitive state," says Rousseau, "men had neither houses, nor huts, nor any kind of property whatever; every one lived where he could, seldom for more than a single night; the sexes united without design, as accident, opportunity, or inclination brought them together." Thus the first men on earth did no harm to any one because they had only the most casual contact with

others. They wore no clothes for they felt no need of them; and for the same reason they built no houses, fenced in no fields, sowed no seed, neither did they form families, tribes, nor nations. Man enjoyed the perfect freedom of the undomesticated brute, and his equality with other men was complete. Responsible to no one, he had no fear of God or a care about the approach of death; conscience never entered to disturb his life, for in this state of nature how could he be anything but good?

But since this state of living has vanished there must be an explanation for the modern condition of society; and Rousseau promptly supplies it by returning to the title of his work. The life of the primitive savage took a complete turn for the worse when he began to associate with his fellow-men, lose his individual independence, and become inferior or superior to the others. Inequality appeared for the first time among men, and it was due mainly to the acquisitiveness of the hitherto solitary and contented individual. The germs of civil society were planted by the establishment of personal ownership over portions of the formerly unbounded earth. "The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying, 'This is mine,' and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society." And Rousseau, who in other places trenchantly defends private ownership, here continues, "From how many crimes, wars, and murders; from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind by pulling up the stakes or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows: 'Beware of listening to this imposter; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to no one.' "

But even this beginning of the new state of man, the transitional period of tribal and family society, does not come entirely under Rousseau's disfavor. It is not yet intolerable, for man has not yet reached the intense activity of later ages. Rousseau would have been satisfied to leave man forever in that kind of society, for, as he wrote later in the *Contrat Social*, "The earliest of all societies, and the only natural one, is the family." In the meanwhile, techniques had been acquired; the use of fire, stone, metal, and wood; methods of hunting and fishing were learned. As roving diminished, casual caves gave way to huts, and finally the whole arrangement of fixed abodes, stable agricultural communities, and family relations became established. Inequality had arrived, and universal happiness was no more.

From this point onward in Rousseau's historical picture the disintegration of value increased in direct proportion to the growth in compactness and complexity of man's relations with man. And the original sin which brought on the catastrophe which he saw in French civilization was nothing more or less than the acquisitiveness of man. Nor was this an instinct. It was simply the evolution of events in the historical and numerical growth of the human race. Could it have been otherwise? Rousseau thinks so, but he is never clear as to how the human race can return to its original state of blessedness. His own later experience, if he meant it to be an example of the primitive life, contained little to be emulated; for he was never happy.

Thus, the original sin which caused the Fall of man in the theistic dispensation, and which was the individual sin of our first parents, was entirely out of the Rousseauvian scheme. For him the Fall from primitive happiness was

caused by the sin of society, a fault committed by a group of individuals, a sin against human charity and mutual justice rather than one of disobedience to a divine command. Likewise in the consequences of the Fall was there a distinct quality in Rousseau's conception. The individual person was not essentially different from what he had been in the earlier state; it was simply that conditions around him had changed to such a degree that he was forced, for the sake of self-protection, to adopt a mode of living foreign to his inborn goodness. His intellect was not darkened, nor was his will weakened—the brute probably had neither intellect nor will. Strictly against his better nature man is forced to act as he does in modern society.

The influence of Rousseau's short period of conversion to Catholicism is negligible in both his theories and his living. He shows distinctly a Protestant leaning in everything he wrote and did. The sin and suffering, injustice and inhumanity apparent to his eyes during almost the whole of his unhappy life, were not interpreted by Rousseau as the result of punishment for sin. Man simply was not prone to sin, and God is simply too good to punish man for wrong-doing due to the conditions in which he lived, and not to any perversity on man's part. It was a wholly gratuitous and idealistic condition of man postulated by Rousseau, and one which only his brilliant handling could make plausible.

He made it appear that the inequality resulting from the growth of civil society was the cause of all human suffering. Evils that could not occur in a primitive state of nature became apparent when property accumulated in the control of individual persons. Thus an enormous stride away from the natural order took place when some men

became rich and others descended into poverty; and the inevitable stage of inequality appeared when some men became the masters of physically subdued slaves.

The surprising inconsistency of Rousseau is found in a comparison between the preface to this discourse and the text itself. For in it he admits—what every one must know—that there was no objective reality to conform to the state of nature which he so lucidly and so dogmatically describes, and “which no longer exists, which perhaps has not existed and which probably never will exist, but which must be accurately understood in order to get just notions as to contemporary society.” The primitive savage was then a mere mirage, a phantasy in the mind of its creator who demanded that although you are aware of its incongruity you must take it as a norm of comparison with the distressing conditions of the modern age. Without the warning of the preface it is quite possible that many readers would be charmed by Rousseau’s convincing style into believing that here was the story of man’s actual descent from solitary blessedness to social woe. It is to Rousseau’s credit at least that he acknowledged the creative quality of his work, a credit which cannot be awarded Darwin or Wells with their dogmatic statements regarding the origin and evolution of the human species.

* * *

Like every other writer who feels that he has a thesis applicable to the betterment of mankind, Rousseau decided to give his views on the education of man, and offer an educational system obviating all the defects of the current method. Here again his cry was “Back to Nature!”

In his *Émile*, published in 1762, he developed as the theme of his ideal educational program what had been viewed historically in the *Discourse on Inequality*. The advice he generously proffered in *Émile* had to do with the rearing and training of children, and concerned itself mainly in a negative manner, by insisting on the abandonment of all those current methods of education which spring from the needs of socialized living.

In claiming that the mental equipment of every child is at birth equal with that of every other, Rousseau was correctly following the teaching of Thomas of Aquino. All intellects, considered solely as intellects, are at birth of the same quality. It is the fact that man is body as well as soul that brings an immediate individuating force to bear upon the intellect and begins to prepare it along certain lines so that it must perforce differ from every other intellect. Physical make-up differs widely; neural arrangements in themselves, in the intimate association of mind and matter, are sufficient to explain the vast inequality of talents and capabilities in men. Of course, environment and education are of great importance, but Rousseau made the mistake of attributing all psychological inequality among men to these two factors.

Further than that, the solution he offered was totally awry because he insisted on injecting into it his fundamental heresy. He noted correctly that the child first begins to learn through the impressions made upon his senses, and that soon, by means of the influence and training of parents, he begins to acquire social habits, and later these habits are expanded into opinions conformable to those of society. This, according to Rousseau, is a grave mistake. The mental equipment of the natural man, which

is the child's intellect before external forces begin to condition it, should be allowed to develop of itself. The dispositions of the intellect should be allowed to go their untrammelled way, and the constraint of social habits and social opinions should not be permitted to modify them, for, "Prior to that modification they constitute what I call nature in us" (*Émile*, Book 1). This psychological state of man's mind is so constructed, and is of so essentially Jansenistic goodness, that it will of itself evolve into the mind of a perfectly educated adult.

I would not willingly misinterpret Rousseau's scheme of education as elaborated in *Émile*, but the inconsistencies contained therein make it doubtful whether the author himself could offer a clear interpretation. The motif at least is clear, and the practical program is there in Rousseau's own lucid prose. The intention he had is obvious.

Rousseau decided that a man's relation to God is of such importance that he must not be swayed in any way in developing that relation. Therefore he demanded that the education of children be taken out of the hands of the clergy and that no formal religious teaching of any kind should be given before the period of adolescence. In the meanwhile the child would be discovering all the worshipful aspects of God and Nature by his own unaided mind which, through its natural propensities for higher things, will lead him unerringly along the correct religious paths, and away from the sordidly material. As for positive teaching, Rousseau devised a pedagogical creed—though he should be the first to deny that it was a creed—from which all the persuasions of Christian dogmatism had been removed, "a sort of sentimental deism for sunny days

dictated by the heart to the head.”⁴ This educational program, a highly individualized and expensive one, was in the last analysis no education at all, for it left to a child not yet educated the choice of means by which he would obtain that education. It gave to an undeveloped intellect the mighty task of deciding what is beneficial and what is harmful for itself, and, granting Rousseau’s first optimistic premise that the mind inherently knows what is best for itself, none can find fault with the formulated program.

In attempting to avoid the genuine danger attending indoctrination, the pendulum of Rousseau’s thought swung in the opposite extreme of wholly liberal education. The full scope given to natural impulses forestalled, it is true, the artificialities of a highly conventional social education, but put in its place a product that was infinitely worse. In practical imitation the pendulum has only recently completed its outward swing—and I trust that I am not over sanguine in thinking that the educational trend is now toward sanity.

The influence of *Émile* did not vanish when the Archbishop of Paris denounced the book and accused its author of heresy; when the erudite members of the Sorbonne faculty demonstrated its fatuousness, when the French Parliament truculently condemned it and issued an order for the arrest of Rousseau, nor even when the Government of Geneva, the author’s native city, ordered all copies to be burnt in the market-place. The immediate effect of this storm of protest was that Rousseau became again a wanderer, fearing imprisonment in France, and being unwanted in the cities of Switzerland where he sought refuge.

⁴ Hearnshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

Finally, Frederick the Great of Prussia granted him temporary protection.

The educational notions, however, contained in *Émile*, have been the basis of the so-called "personality development" theory of certain educationalists. The idea that good men could be made by encouraging the natural aptitudes they demonstrate in childhood is no false pedagogical principle, but the error enters when childish inclinations and aptitudes, whether good or evil, are allowed to develop unchecked by proper influences. Bertrand Russell made a rather grotesque experiment along the lines laid down by Rousseau, especially according to the idea of "unhindered personality," and the result was total failure. Count Tolstoy fell victim to the same liberal delusion in his Russian experiment, and he too was forced to give up the practice, though he held steadfastly, even in face of failure, to the maintenance of the theory. The extremism of free personality development in much of modern education has led to disastrous results, but it must be admitted that in the kindergarten movement, where the whole array of paper-coloring and sand-building and "learning by doing" is not permitted to go to extremes, there have been genuinely beneficial results. These modes of bringing out the individual proclivities of children ultimately rest on Rousseau's inspiration, but in so far as they are used as means to education and not as ends in themselves, they are no longer Rousseauvian.

* * *

If one could divorce Rousseau's fundamental theme from his subsequent political writings, and disregard the

contradictions and anomalies, especially in the *Contrat Social*, he would be forced to admit the utter plausibility of the arguments contained therein. In condemning Rousseau we must not be led into a sweeping condemnation of the one work which was more powerful than any other piece of writing in pushing forward the possibility of political democracy. In the *Contrat Social* he made evident mistakes simply because the basic premise of his thesis of humanity was mistaken, but taken as a whole, this short document is a root from which has grown all we have of modern democracy.

It is not that he presented in the *Contrat Social* the thesis that democracy is the best and most practical form of government, or that men are so constituted that they will be better citizens or better men under a democratic régime than under a monarchy or oligarchy. It is rather his contention that democracy is the right government; and in no other work, whether condemned as consistently as this, or praised as extravagantly, can there be found so compactly and clearly stated the arguments showing why the democratic method is the best method of government for man.

In the introductory note to the book the author makes a cautious and frank approach to the problem, stating that he merely wishes "to inquire whether, taking men as they are and laws as they can be made, it is possible to establish some just and certain rule of administration in civil affairs. In this investigation I shall always strive to reconcile what right permits with what interest prescribes, so that justice and utility may not be severed." Here immediately, in the opening passage of his book, there is ground for a legitimate quibble over the gradation of values he assumes. It

is true that the laws are for men, and that men are not made for the laws, but "taking men as they are" is precisely what Rousseau failed to do in all his writing about men and in all his personal dealings with men. He created a man according to his own prejudiced plan, complained that social conditions had fashioned him different than he should be, and then proclaimed that he wished to take man as he found him.

Then there is the fault of making justice conform to utility, in other words, of finding out first what is the most useful thing for man and then to proclaim it, within some indefinite bounds of his own choosing, to be "what right permits." It is a subtle way of stating that if there is no political utility in any certain state for the natural man whom Rousseau has postulated, then there can be no justification for that form of government.

The first sentence of the first chapter, "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains," became the vocal harbinger of revolution in practically every modern country, and it heralded that liberty, equality, and fraternity which first found expression among the French, and then attached itself to every other people thereafter seeking democratic self-rule. The solution offered by Rousseau was in reality his bowing down to the inevitable facts of modern civilization; it was his attempt to reconcile the primitive freedom which he portrayed in the *Discourse on Inequality* (man is born free) and the submission to authority (everywhere he is in chains) which he found all about him in contemporary France. There is no doubt that he saw the need of government; he was never an anarchist, despite the charges foolishly leveled against him by men ignorant of the contents of the *Contrat Social*. As he had

traced the growth of society from the primeval natural state of man through the various phases of society—family, tribal, and civil—he had become reconciled to the fact that man requires some form of governing authority, if only for the protection and furtherance of the natural virtues he possesses. But that government must in form be compatible with the virtues inherent in man, now, it is true, buried far below the veneer of social usage, but nevertheless possible of definite cultivation.

The major complaint of Rousseau against society was the inequality of man; and the major virtue of his natural man, as has been pointed out so often, is natural goodness. But the goodness of man was a blessing which remained enjoyable and unhindered as long as man remained free, that is, before the blight of inequality overtook him. Therefore, to Rousseau, goodness could not function without freedom, though plainly one is not synonymous with the other. Rousseau regarded one as the necessary condition of the other, and here he placed emphasis on freedom rather than on goodness.

“Common liberty,” he continues in the second chapter, “is a consequence of man’s nature. His first law is to attend to his own preservation, his first cares are those which he owes to himself; and as soon as he comes to years of discretion, being sole judge of the means adapted for his own preservation, he becomes his own master.” But when the pre-social period was lost in the dim fastness of history, common sense dictated that authority of some kind be established so that the common good could be promoted, and this authority, if it was to be respected and obeyed, was forced to find some moral justification for its existence. In his terse third chapter Rousseau scouts the idea of the

right of the strongest, "a right apparently assumed in irony, and really established in principle." The strongest transformed his power into right, and obedience into duty; and this is the irony of justifying might. "All power comes from God, I admit; but every disease comes from him too; does it follow that we are prohibited from calling in a physician?"

No matter how necessary a conventional form of authority may be in the state, a man is less a man when he abjectly gives over his freedom to another. "To renounce one's liberty is to renounce one's quality as a man, the rights and also the duties of humanity. For him who renounces everything there is no possible compensation. Such a renunciation is incompatible with man's nature, for to take away all freedom from his will is to take away all morality from his actions. In short, a convention which stipulates absolute authority on the one side and unlimited obedience on the other is vain and contradictory." Absence of restrictive authority had been the blessing of man in his pre-social existence, but in an organized society some form of authority is necessary. How then can a man retain his freedom and still give obedience to the laws?

Rousseau answers this question by suggesting that if an individual freely makes a law of conduct for himself and then freely obeys it, without coercion of society or convention, he remains a free man. Thus, in a nation where many men live together, authority and liberty can be reconciled. If all the citizens of a country voluntarily legislate for their own benefit, and then voluntarily bind themselves to obey their own legislation, they will remain as free in the modern organization of society as primitive man was in the "natural" state of humanity.

The social pact which is made among the citizens furnished the solution for the fundamental problem of finding "a form of association which may defend and protect with the whole force of the community the person and property of every associate, and by means of which each, coalescing with all, may nevertheless obey only himself, and remain as free as before." The freely made pact entered into by all the people represents the General Will, and this general will is the State protecting individual liberty because it embodies it. The general will cannot be delegated to a group, nor can it be handed over, even voluntarily, by the people to some ruler. It was a complete and direct democracy that Rousseau advocated, not a representative or modified form. "The citizens being all equal by the social contract, all can prescribe what all ought to do, while no one has a right to demand that another should do what he will not do himself."

The social compact, then, is not a contract of one person with another, but of all with all, and this contract of universal association is the only one which can exist in the state; of its very nature it excludes all others. This is the only kind of democracy Rousseau admitted, but when he later wrote the constitutions for Poland and Corsica, he was forced to moderate it because of its impracticality. *Pure* democracy is, as experience and common sense teach, an impossibility except where the state is so small that the citizens are able to have close and immediate contact with each other. Rousseau himself saw that a small state was ever in danger of subjugation by a stronger power; he pointed to Athens where the first concern of the citizenry was a political one, but objected to it because the freedom of the citizens was founded

on the mass of its slaves. Of modern states, the only one approaching pure democracy is Switzerland where small democratic localities form a loose national federation.

Through all his theorizing on democracy there is traceable Rousseau's fundamental faith in the unfettered intellect of man, and the insistence that if man were permitted to act freely according to his natural and innate goodness, the benefit to both society and individual would be permanent. That the theory is completely awry is attested merely by an examination of man's historical practice. One cannot construct a hypothetical human animal, put him in the place of man "as we find him," and then expect any definite results.

But that he was wrong in his interpretation of man's nature does not obviate the fact of Rousseau's tremendous influence. Such far-removed persons as Shelley and Byron in their romantic poetry of freedom came under his sway. Even men like Paine, Jefferson, and the late Veblen owed much of their political theory to him; and hundreds of interpretive studies of the man and his works attest the continued world interest and significance of the primitive Rousseau. The end of his influence has not yet come.

RESTLESS REBEL

Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

EVERY NOW AND THEN A SWASHBUCKLER GALLANTLY stalks across the world's stage, makes a blustery furor in his passing, but in the final act, dies, saddened and disillusioned. Like the lover, the swashbuckler is an individualist, always pointing his efforts to some goal, and almost always receiving little personal benefit from his actions. Thomas Paine was somewhat of a swashbuckler, and somewhat of a lover. He was romantic in the imaginative plans he had for the freedom of his fellow-men, spectacular in the methods he used to bring himself to the world's attention, turbulent as a hurricane in the political movements of England, France, and the United States.

As a political and philosophical author and agitator during the last part of the eighteenth century, Paine became known as the "Prince of Pamphleteers." While still alive, his influence was direct and personal in the three most progressive countries of the world; but after his death in 1809, it spread to a much greater extent, and was felt wherever democratic liberalism began to take hold of a people. His importance in the movement for the liberalizing of politics lay in the fact that he consid-

ered the fight of the oppressed against their oppressors the grand and sole duty of his life. Through an extensive use of pamphlets and newspaper propaganda he was enabled to spread ideas for the alleviation of the underprivileged, and bring to the notice of the poorly educated masses their possibilities of obtaining permanent freedom from oppression.

It is a popular mode of expression to say that this or that social reformer was "a century ahead of his time" in the proposals he made. Actually, there is no such thing as being ahead of one's time in advocating social principles, and insisting on methods for putting them into practice. The principles have been known for ages; and practically every modern method has been employed before. A man is not ahead of his time; it is simply that peoples and governments are behind the times. When, for instance, Paine agitated for the institution of labor unions, more equitable taxes on income, fuller educational facilities, and old-age pensions, all of which are just now coming to a realization, he was not ahead of his time. Society was as ripe for these necessities a century and a half ago as it is overripe for them in the midst of this twentieth century. In catching up with the ideas of Paine, modern political leaders are now using as a remedy proposals that he would have used as a preventive.

When he proposed world disarmament, Paine was a greater dreamer than he knew, for at that time it would have meant the disarming mainly of England and France, and neither could have existed in its former glory without the aid of well-manned armies and navies. International arbitration foresaw something of the World Court idea, or the League of Nations attempt, but here, too,

he idealized human nature in thinking that arbitration would be allowed to interfere with imperial expansion. In his attack entitled *African Slavery in America*, he was at once more astute and more practical, for after flaying the slave-trade on religious, moral, and economic grounds, he proposed plans for the future emancipated slaves. Thus, though none of these plans were carried out, or even inaugurated on a large scale before his death, Paine can be termed a precursor of national and international reform.

* * *

It is a sad record of history that Paine should be remembered in this day as the "Infidel" because of his religious prejudices, rather than as a progressive social reformer. However, such is the case, and the sobriquet is given him justly. It was the fault of a proud nature that demanded freedom even from the beneficent restraint of a God.

Thomas Paine was of pious Quaker extraction, and perhaps it was because of the formal and meatless teaching of this sect that he became a skeptic even before he could well read and write. At any rate, there is the further fact that the spirit of Rousseau was in the air during his lifetime, the seeds of which had been sown before Paine was born at Norfolk, England, in 1737. As a mature man, sobered by imprisonment in France, he gazed back at his childhood disbelief, describing it in the pamphlet, *Age of Reason*. "From the time I was capable of conceiving an idea and acting upon it by reflection, I either doubted the truth of the Christian system, or thought it to be a strange affair; I scarcely knew which it was: but I well

remember, when I was seven or eight years of age, hearing a sermon read upon the subject of what is called redemption by the *Son of God*. After the sermon I revolted at the recollection of what I had heard and thought to myself that it was making God Almighty act like a passionate man that killed his son when he could not revenge himself in any other way . . . it was to me a serious reflection, arising from the idea that God was too good to do such an action, and also too almighty to be under any necessity of doing it.”¹

Greater thinkers than Paine, the eight-year-old boy, had stumbled over the doctrine of the Redemption of man by the Son of God. And it is not surprising that Paine, who never really became an infidel, and who always maintained his belief that “God was too good” to allow the death of His Son, should find it difficult of belief. In the first place, he had the miserable influence of a somber Quakerism to darken his early youth, and the penumbra of half-truths arrived at by Protestant individualism to scramble his thinking. The thought, too, that God is omnipotent had some queer connotations that followed Paine throughout all the actions of his life.

He prided himself on his rationalistic outlook in the matter of religion, but never became what might be termed an irreligious man. Enemies have frequently known only that he tried to reason about religion, that he ridiculed Christianity without sufficient cause, that he scored abuses which were in undoubted need of correction, and they had concluded that the opprobrious titles conferred on him were the extent of the man’s reputation. It is always well to remember that Paine was not so black as

¹ Thomas Paine, *Age of Reason*, Part I, p. 37.

he was chalked. Imprudent, impetuous, and, in many cases, downright irrational he surely was; but the mere fact that he was so much before the public gaze accounts for these faults being greatly magnified.

The boyhood of Paine was conditioned by the poverty of his parents. Although he showed an aptitude for working mathematical problems, turning a fair piece of verse on occasion, and delving into scientific treatises, he was forced to contribute to the family income at the early age of thirteen. His father was a corset-maker by trade, and it was only natural that the son should be taken from his school-bench to his father's work-bench. But the work of a shop-laborer proved unimaginative, as might be expected in the case of a youthful dreamer, and worse than that, it proved unremunerative so that he could see little reason for staying at it.

The war against France attracted him with the possibilities of broadening his field of opportunities, and he threw over the drudgery of his father's shop for the adventures of the sea. This, too, was not so congenial nor so permanent a position as he had supposed it to be. The result was a return to his former trade, and then another break from the life of manual labor. This time he obtained a position as revenue officer, or exciseman, in which it was his duty to single out smugglers, examine their goods, gauge the size, shape, and content of their beer-barrels, and then turn offenders over to the local authorities. The position was an experience in the deceptive antics of human nature, and the young officer seemed to have a great enthusiasm for it. But minor discrepancies crept into the accounts he was supposed to keep, and he was discharged for irregularity, though there is no record

of his having been imprisoned or even fined for the offense. Another low period came when he barely eked out an existence teaching English at starvation wages in a London school.

Interesting as is the account of Paine's day-by-day existence at this early formative period, of more interest is the knowledge of the source of his ideas. With his flair for quick reading and quick thinking, he attended many of the free philosophical lectures then given in London, and soon tried his oratorical ability in preaching the ideas he had formulated from them. Religion was the topic of his debate and lecture attempts. Gathering an audience wherever he could, he would bill himself as "an independent, or Methodist," and proceed to enunciate the doctrine of the goodness of God as he himself interpreted it. Strangely enough, for the future "infidel," he once made application for ordination in the Anglican Church, feeling that with a little study he could easily fit himself for that rôle. Church officials, however, were of a different mind in regard to his orthodoxy, though they probably never doubted his preaching abilities, and he was refused the ministry.

In the meanwhile, Paine was renewing his friendship with the men in control of the revenue business. After rendering a humble apology for his former misconduct, he was again received into the excise service, and quickly worked his way into the graces of his fellows, being chosen by them to present to Parliament their petition for an increase in wages. Paine was in his glory in this kind of mission, blandly interviewing government officials with a view to his own possible promotion, and making a favorable impression on the visiting Benjamin Franklin. In 1774 he

found himself again in trouble with his superiors, the Board of Excise. The charge this time was that he had attempted to escape the dunning of his creditors and had left his post without permission. His discharge left him a penniless failure, his effects had been sold to cancel his debts, and even domestic life came to pieces when his second wife legally separated from him. The last resort was America and the friend he hoped would remember him there, Benjamin Franklin.

At the age of thirty-seven Thomas Paine was an outright failure, but the experiences he had gone through up till then merely fitted him the better for the destiny he was to carve in the colonies. The one thing that could not be taken from him was the impression he had received in the various occupations of shop-worker, sailor, tradesman, revenue officer, preacher, and teacher. All this had given him an excellent and revealing cross-section of English society. He had not only observed, but had been a part of the misery, poverty, degradation, and insecurity of slum-dwellers and agricultural workers in the midst of England's national prosperity. Of opulence there was plenty, but it was concentrated in the high places. Of public corruption he had seen more than a normal man's share during the term of government duty. He had become intimate with the suffering and cruelty rampant among the lower classes, and his soul was full of dreams of liberty; free of all domestic ties, of patriotic love, he was ready now to address a whole people on the principles of democratic government. Disillusioned with the European scene, he sailed for America.

Thomas Paine came to the United States at the end of November, 1774, empty-handed but not without visions of a new vocation among the lusty colonizers. His sole asset, the one that was the stepping stone to his future greatness, was a letter of introduction from Benjamin Franklin to the latter's brother-in-law, Robert Bache. Through him Paine made the acquaintance of Robert Aiken, the Philadelphia editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, which was then beginning a vigorous crusade against the very evils Paine despised. In an editorial position on this magazine he immediately made his name known through virulent excoriation of the slave system. He had free rein in his new capacity and could berate the trade and the traders to the fullness of his energetic zeal.

If the War of Independence had not intervened it is quite possible that Paine would have carried the anti-slavery fight to a finish before the end of the century, and thus put out of the way what later became the ostensible cause of another bloody war. The slavery question was already a choice subject for any one having the controversial propensities of Paine; there were complaints on both sides, represented mainly by the free workers and social-uplift groups on the one side, and, on the other, by the large plantation- and mill-owners who would have faced immediate ruin through abolition. In the magazine, Paine confronted the American colonists with the economic instability of a civilization based on slave workers, and with all the arguments he could muster on the grounds of religious feelings and moral persuasions.

Indeed, he did his work so well that future abolitionists could add little to the forcefulness of his arguments, and took them bodily from Paine's works. But he was not con-

tent to confine himself to the pages of a newsorgan; the possibilities of pamphleteering lured him into the composition and distribution of *African Slavery in America*. In this cogent leaflet he disproved the oft-advanced argument that slave-holding was sanctioned by the Scriptures. He held that unless a person were deprived of his freedom upon conviction of a crime, and sentenced by legal authority to a term of labor, he could not morally be held in subjection. This held for negroes just as it did for white men. "As these people," he wrote, "are not convicted of forfeiting freedom, they have still a natural, perfect right to it; and the Government, whenever they come, should, in justice, set them free, and punish those who hold them in slavery."² Rationally—and Paine was forever insisting on reasonable arguments—he demonstrated that the real criminals, worthy of confinement, were the slave-traders and owners.

The colonies were beginning to feel the yoke of subjection to England at that time, and were complaining vigorously about their own subjection to the Crown. Paine found in that attitude another argument against slavery. How could the Americans with any degree of consistency "complain of attempts to enslave them while they hold so many hundred thousands in slavery. . . . How just, how suitable to our crime is the punishment with which Providence threatens us." In this *argumentum ad hominem* the propagandist showed his resourcefulness in making use of every contemporary fact he could gather for his presentation. And the effect of this first anti-slavery argument was almost immediate, for only about a month after its publica-

² M. Conway (editor and collector), *Writings of Thomas Paine*, Boston (1896), Putnam's Sons, Vol. I, p. 7.

tion the first organized anti-slavery movement was started in Philadelphia.

It is easy enough to pick flaws in a system as obviously wrong as the institution of slavery is, but the real crusader must take a long-range view of his social theories, and prepare to put something in the place of the system he would abolish. The disintegration of the slave system, especially on the large plantations and farms, would have meant an enormous problem to both owner and slave. Abruptly freeing the slaves brought that problem to the whole South after the Civil War, a problem whose effects are still being felt. Paine foresaw such an effect, and proposed that the old slaves should be retained by the masters to whom they had given their services. As for the younger and able-bodied, the legislatures were to determine what was practical so that the owners would not suffer too greatly, and so that the slaves could gain a footing of their own by which they could live independently. He himself spent some time in outlining various plans to be followed so that the slave evil would not be supplanted by greater evils.

Slavery was merely an item, perforce the most important one, with which Paine busied himself while on the editorial staff of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. His reforming zeal and his passion for liberty and justice led him into many other fields of interest. The variety of his interests is seen from the variety of causes he championed during his first years in America. Dueling, a relict from the old-world notions of honor, was repugnant to him, and he demanded its prohibition. Disarmament of all the nations of the world and the institution of international arbitration were his contributions to the outlawing of war among nations. In a not altogether unselfish attitude he asked that

copyright laws be introduced and promulgated in America. In a more domestic attitude he promoted an interest in the prevention of cruelty to animals, though he hardly carried this to the extreme later protagonists demonstrate. Finally despite his own sorry experiences with women and his downright contempt for their fickleness, he championed in a gracious manner the rights of women. A universal reformer, if there ever was one.

* * *

Within a year after his arrival in America Paine had definitely made himself famous as a pamphleteer, but when it was learned that *Common Sense*, first published anonymously in 1775, was the work of his pen, he quickly achieved the first rank of publicizers. It was Paine's contribution to the fire which then smoldered in the hearts of American colonists, and it gave an undoubted impetus to the people's active rebellion. The conflict within the soul of Thomas Paine must have been a great one before he had made his decision to write in favor of armed resistance. He still retained the Quaker love of democracy and hatred of violence, and in the current difficulty in the colonies he had to set the one against the other.

Before coming to his decision on the matter of open hostilities with the mother country, Paine noted carefully that every peaceful means of obtaining redress had failed and that the only immediate and effective remedy for their wrongs was to throw off completely the absolutism of the King. *Common Sense* proved to be more than a mere rabble rouser. It was the greatest single force in solidifying the action of the colonists, by showing them *why* they

should support the revolution and the setting up of an independent nation.

His proposition for the establishment of a new republic was a bold stroke at the very heart of the colonists' apathy. *Common Sense* showed that the troubles into which they had been plunged could not be settled by any half-way measures, by any compromises with a King who might again take advantage of them when conditions had settled down. It showed the Americans for the first time that perhaps the British Constitution, with its arrangement of king, lords, and commons, its legislative and executive mode of procedure, need not necessarily be the best form of government for them. It went on to prove that a war between an independent people and England had greater implications for ultimate success than a mere rebellion of a subject people against its acknowledged mother country. It opened to the common gaze the domestic resources for war, and the possibility of obtaining foreign help if the Americans decided for independence. In other words, *Common Sense* demanded the complete severance of the colonies from England, and the institution of a national unity.

The effect of the pamphlet was startling. Approximately a half million copies were sold, and the entire proceeds from its sale, which amounted to a small fortune in itself, were devoted by Paine to the cause of the Revolution. It was the trumpet call sounding the unification of energies; it became the prime topic of the day; and the further it spread and was discussed, the more it removed the prejudices of a people who had not till then achieved any great degree of confidence in themselves or their leaders. Removing preconceived notions from the minds of people is generally a hopeless task, and it speaks highly for the

brilliance of Paine's argumentation that he was able to accomplish it almost overnight. He had electrified the country into action, and gradually, too, translations of the pamphlet were read in other parts of the world, where they stirred people who wished the new republic success in its fight against England.

Paine had given over his Quaker principles sufficiently to warrant his advocating the use of armed resistance; now he went a step further and enlisted for active service in the Continental army. His preferences, however, lay in the field of publicizing, and after several engagements on the field of battle, he was returned to the position in which he could do his most effective work for the new country. Later he sat as a member of the Council of Foreign Affairs and essayed the first few steps of a diplomatic career. But propaganda was his forte, and his work with the printed word outshone his contribution as soldier and diplomat.

Through the whole disheartening proceedings of the War of Independence, Paine was the rallying point of the American spirit. In the face of repeated disaster and discouragement, official non-support of the army, and counter-revolutionary activities of the Tories, Paine kept alive the objectives for which they were fighting. He had been in no small degree responsible for the outbreak of the war, and he was largely responsible for the continued morale of both soldiers and civilians, whom he strengthened through a series of brilliant writings entitled *The Crisis*. The object of these pamphlets was to keep up the determination, the will to freedom; and the powerful influence they had over the mass of the colonists won for him the esteem and friendship of Washington, Monroe, Jefferson, and other leaders of the Revolution.

These men knew well the invaluable effect of both *Common Sense* and *The Crisis*, and after the peace had been declared they kept in mind the services rendered by Thomas Paine. In the distribution of awards for signal service he became financially independent. The State of New York presented him with an estate of two hundred and seventy-seven acres at New Rochelle; five hundred pounds were added from the coffers of the State of Pennsylvania, while the new Congress voted him an award of three thousand dollars. For a young country saddled with debt, these were no mean gifts, and they relieved, for the first time, the poverty to which Paine had all his life been accustomed. He settled down for a few years to the scientific study and mechanical experimentation for which he had a natural bent, and the result of his work was the perfection of a practical iron bridge, and the invention of a "smokeless candle."

* * *

But iron bridges and scientific study were mere incidents in the life of a man like Thomas Paine. Now that liberty and independence had been attained, American life became too prosaic for him. He wanted a larger stage for the display of his talents, a stage on which he could strut and fume and cast challenges in the teeth of aggressive enemies. He remembered England, and off he sailed to propagate in his native land the principles of free republicanism he had helped to establish in his adopted country. For him the task in America had been done; liberty had been achieved; the new task was to preach liberty in the unfree countries of Europe.

Before going to England in 1787, Paine stopped for a while in France, where Jefferson, the first American minister to that country, the Marquis de Lafayette, and the Marquis de Condorcet received him with a most cordial welcome. Ostensibly he had come to Europe to popularize his bridge invention, and the French Academy of Science gladly endorsed it. Going to England, he was lionized by Burke, Fox, and their party, and here too he obtained the endorsement of the English Royal Society for his invention. For a while Paine journeyed back and forth between the two countries, renewing old acquaintances and arousing general interest in this new departure in bridge-building and the use of iron in suspended constructions. But the storm was brewing and he enthusiastically plunged into it.

Paine was an eye witness of the French Revolution of 1789; he had watched it develop and mature, and was in strong sympathy with the cause of the revolutionists. At the end of that year an English non-conformist minister, Dr. Price, startled his audience with a sermon in defense of the French uprising. As George Creel writes, he "rejoiced in the triumph of liberty and justice over arbitrary power and congratulated the French people on their revolution and boldly asserted the inalienable right of the people to resist power when it was abused, to elect their governors and discharge them, and to write a new constitution whenever the old proved outworn or inadequate."³ In conservative England the effect of such a challenge could not go unnoticed, and Edmund Burke then published his masterpiece, *Reflections on the French Revolution*. His denunciation of the political innovators became

³ George Creel, *Tom Paine—Liberty Bell*, New York (1932), Sears, p. 36.

known all over Europe, and only an expert pamphleteer like Paine could hope to overcome its influence.

Edmund Burke had been a colonial sympathizer when Paine returned from America, and as such had received him with open arms. But when the matter of revolutionary change of European governments came closer to home, he showed a swing away from his earlier opinions. There was a rift between him and Paine, which was irreparably widened by the latter's pamphlet *The Rights of Man*, published in 1791 as a rebuttal to Burke's *Reflections*. Paine was vitriolic in condemning the ignorance, prejudice, and blind partisanship of Burke, but he was suave and coldly logical in presenting arguments for his cause, the defense of revolution against oppression. "The duty of man," he wrote, "is not a wilderness of turnpike gates through which he is to pass by tickets from one to the other. It is plain and simple, and consists but of two points. His duty to God, which every man must feel; and with respect to his neighbor, to do as he would be done by."⁴ It was all as simple as that to Paine, and it is no cause of wonder that the pamphlet took hold of the popular imagination.

He denounced Burke for upholding the government of monarchy and aristocracy, and thus denying the people their civil right to choose their own rulers and their own form of government. He pointed out that Burke had misrepresented the French Revolution in claiming that it was an uprising against Louis XVI. It really was, he explained, a rebellion against the monarchic principle behind the whole idea of hereditary succession. He refuted Burke's

⁴ Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man*, quoted by Donald Wagner, *Social Reformers*, New York (1937), Macmillan, p. 104.

charge that there was great cruelty practiced by the revolutionists. Then he described the origin and growth of human rights, showing that natural rights are those which appertain to man in right of his existence, and civil rights those coming to man from the fact of his sociability.

Society itself, that is, in its national aspect of government, arises either "out of the people or over the people," and in this distinction lies all the difference between despotism and democracy. Paine's comparison of the French and English constitutions showed clearly that he considered the latter an archaic and illiberal document. Historically, he built a strong argument against Burke's apologia for benevolent feudalism by remarking some of the blatant cruelties and stupidities of the English kings from William the Conqueror down to the Hanoverians. Actually, "the country has never yet regenerated itself, and is therefore without a Constitution. A belief in primogeniture requires a belief in the hereditary descent of talents and abilities, a belief that can be fostered only in a country that is woefully ignorant." He sneered at this credence in hereditary succession of the most important position in the country, and showed that under the monarchical system even an idiot might fill the throne.

The *Rights of Man* quickly became an inspiring book for the common people of England, and approximately two hundred thousand copies were sold, the proceeds of which Paine again donated to the cause of democracy, giving them to the Society for Constitutional Information, a group sympathetic to the French revolutionists. For a while the battle between Burke and Paine was strong, with all the defenders of nobility lined up on the side of Burke. But the sale of Burke's *Reflections*, about thirty thousand

copies, was literally snowed under by the enormous influence of the *Rights*.

The second part of Paine's pamphlet came out in the following year, and it was met by an official government charge of high treason against him. The case came up in June, but was postponed until December. During the summer Paine went to France, and was thus condemned, *absente reo*, by a special jury, declared an outlaw, and his life forfeit if he ever returned to England.

The second part of the *Rights of Man* is probably the clearest and most forceful bit of writing Paine accomplished in all his work. Certainly, it is the most important in showing the progressive and sound ideas he held in the matter of good government. It was still a part of the answer to Burke's charges, but expanded much beyond that by giving in minute detail a study of society and civilization, of the ancient and modern systems, of constitutional government according to the ideal of the American republic. Further than this, he worked out a social system of reform that would fill many of the basic needs of society, needs that are crying for legislative action even in present-day society.

It was in reality a complete, detailed program for social and economic reform. Old-age pensions were a feature of his scheme of betterment, as were maternity benefits for the indigent, municipally owned and operated factories to lessen the unemployment problem, labor organizations to protect the rights of the workers, compulsory education up to a certain age, financial assistance to widows and to the children of poor families. Nor were these simply random proposals of a wild-haired idealist. Paine had worked out a plan by which the financing of these improvements could

be borne by the government. It was arranged on a distributive principle, socialistic to the minds of reactionaries, by which those who have means might assist those who have nothing. He proposed a graduated tax on income, the abolition of useless and expensive political bureaucracy, the reduction of national armament by international agreement.

Paine was enthusiastic over the possibilities contained in his plans. In the fifth chapter of this second part, he wrote, "Never did so great an opportunity offer itself to England, and to all Europe, as is produced by the two Revolutions of America and France. By the former, Freedom has a national champion in the western world; by the latter, in Europe. When another nation shall join France, despotism and bad government will scarcely dare to appear. To use a trite expression, the iron is becoming hot all over Europe. The insulted German and the enslaved Spaniard, the Russ and the Pole, are beginning to think. The present age will hereafter merit to be called the Age of Reason, and the present generation will appear to the future as the Adam of a new world."⁵ But England was not America, and the English people were not so ready to rise against their own government as the Americans had been to rebel against a foreign power. Paine became an outlaw and went to France.

In that country he was once again in his element. The people were wildly jubilant over his defense of the Revolution, and on the strength of his reputation he was elected as the member from Calais to represent four departments in the National Convention. Almost immediately, however, he found himself in conflict over the important ques-

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

tion of the deposition of the former king. Long and loudly he protested against the death sentence, and by casting his vote against it incurred the disfavor of the Convention's radical group. The camp with which he had allied himself, the Girondists, lost power later in the year, and Paine found himself unexpectedly ousted from his seat on the charge of being a foreigner. The friends who had with him counseled moderation in the affairs of the new republic were gradually put out of the way by the guillotine of Robespierre, but the author of the *Rights of Man* was, by that very authorship, saved from the same fate. Robespierre could not execute a man whose picture hung in almost every French peasant's home.

Reminiscent of modern Bolshevist methods is the delation and incarceration of Thomas Paine in the last days of 1793. He was too level-headed, too moderate in his views, too conservative in his long-range policy; and on the simple charge of being an Englishman and an enemy of the Republic, he, its ablest protagonist, spent almost a year in prison.

Embittered by the disappointment attendant on his commitment, Paine made the mistake of his life. Had he died on entering prison, or been guillotined, he would now loom as the greatest defender of liberty produced by the eighteenth century. The evil of his imprisonment caused the evil of his *Age of Reason*, for if he had remained a free man he probably never would have written it. The pamphlet was unbalanced in that it flailed unmercifully the less comprehensible doctrines of Christian revelation, doctrines which at best Paine never understood. He ridiculed traditions the meaning of which escaped him, but he was never an atheist. In fact he had been one of the co-

founders of a French religious sect, the "Theophilanthropists," which gained some prominence until the resurgence of Catholicism. But because of his pamphlet, Paine has forever remained the "Infidel" in the broad reaches of the historical background. Even his eight explanatory *Letters to the Citizens of the United States* did not change the current opinion that he was an out and out atheist. Unpopularity was the price he paid for his attack on religion.

Between his release from prison and his return to America in 1802, Paine was by no means an idle author. Still using the medium of pamphlets, he worked on a series of causes. A half-century before Henry George made the system popular, he advocated a Single Tax economy; he excoriated the evils of excessive wealth and of economic injustice to the working class. He had dedicated the first part of the *Rights of Man* to George Washington, and now he furiously attacked him for Washington's neglect of Paine while in prison. Napoleon Bonaparte had visited Paine after the first Italian campaign and had told him that he slept with a copy of the *Rights of Man* under his pillow; and now Paine proposed that Napoleon should invade England, free the masses of the people from tyranny, and give them a constitution modeled on that pamphlet. The Jay Treaty was a sore spot which he vigorously attacked; and the final magnificent proposal he made was to insure peace through the establishment of a League of Nations.

With all this behind him, the swashbuckler sailed into Chesapeake Bay in 1802 with the full expectation of swaggering through the country to the applause of his former friends. But the charmer had lost his appeal, the erstwhile hero of the War of Independence was now the villain of

irreligion, and the memory of *Common Sense* was erased in the notoriety of the *Age of Reason*. Paine's old friend, Thomas Jefferson, now president of the United States, received him cordially, but the country as a whole regarded him coldly; especially were the denominational religionists antagonistic to him, being encouraged by undemocratic Federalists. This unexpected attitude on the part of former associates and friends with whom he had fought and suffered during the Revolution cut the "Infidel" to the quick.

There was nothing left for the broken old man except to retire to his estate at New Rochelle. But even here he had no peace. Near the end of his days the wildest stories were current throughout the country; some had it that he had seen the error of his ways and had retracted all the objectionable statements ever made by him; others charged that his few friends were keeping him befuddled with liquor so that he could not write an official recantation. Whatever the story of his last days, it will probably never be truthfully known; and he died in the bad graces of the citizens of three countries. The end of his career came on June 8, 1809.

ENERGETIC DREAMER

Robert Owen (1771-1859)

SOME ONE RECENTLY MADE THE FACETIOUS REMARK that "when Greek meets Greek a new eating house is established," which remark seems to indicate that Greeks are able to work well in harmony. Among communists there is anything but this working agreement; for when communist meets communist, one immediately dubs the other a counter-revolutionist or a hidebound reactionary. Thus it is always interesting to learn what one Red thinks of another Red, and it is especially enlightening to know what the authors of the *Communist Manifesto* have to say about their forerunners in socialism.

The document criticizes them thus: "The Socialist and Communist systems properly so-called, those of St. Simon, Fourier, Owen and others, spring into existence in the early undeveloped period." For this reason they had not Marx's self-determined interpretation of historical events to lead them along the correct path, and they deprecated the class struggle. "Hence, they reject all political, and especially all revolutionary action; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, and endeavor, by small experiments, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of

example, to pave the way for the new social gospel.”¹ Holding out for peaceful and practical experimentation in the face of a communist is like waving a straw in the face of a tornado.

And then Marx and Engels point out that these “Critical Utopian Socialists,” as they called them, made the mistake of looking at society as a whole. To the framers of the *Communist Manifesto*, this was the besetting sin of any social thinker: that he should regard society as it truly is at any given time in history, criticizing the factual representation rather than idealizing the past with some preconceived notions of his own. Beside having this grave fault of a general outlook on society, Owen was accused also of paying too much attention to the ruling class, of attempting to fashion a new scheme of things which would allow of rectifying the abuses to which *all men* were subjected, instead of concerning himself only with the proletariat.

* * *

Robert Owen was a canny Welshman, begotten of a father who combined all the habits of thrift and industry for which the son was to become remarkable. Owen's father eked out the family existence by applying himself to two vocations and an avocation; he was by trade a saddler and an iron-monger, and in his spare hours served as postmaster of the town of Newton in Montgomeryshire. The saddler's trade bespoke a day of fast horses, fox hunts, and fashionable riding, a day that was passing in England; the trade of iron-monger presaged the new era of industrialization to which Robert Owen was to make a genuine

¹ *Handbook of Marxism*, Workers' International Library, pp. 55-6.

contribution. He was born in 1771, early enough to see the political revolution in America, to study the people's revolution in England.

Owen just missed being the seventh son of a seventh son; he was the second youngest of seven children, and seems to have earned the proverbial reputation of activity and precociousness. The story goes that he learned all his schoolmaster could teach him before he was seven years old, but continued in the country school-house as an assistant to the teacher, and as an "usher," a mystifying function by which he helped pay for his schooling. The two years he spent in this way did not seem very profitable for him, for as he said, they "were lost to me, except that I thus early acquired the habit of teaching others what I knew."

But in reality there was much more to the boy's education than his evident pride admits. He wheedled permission from the local clergyman, physician, and lawyers to browse in their libraries and read whatever pleased him. And if it is true, as Hutchins continually points out, that a complete education is found in reading the great books of great minds, the boy was early on the road to a complete education. Novels, history, poetry, and biography were of interest to him, but he had an especial taste for religious controversy. Unhampered by the disciplinary advantage of a mature guide, he borrowed a number of religious books from some Methodist friends of his family, and as might be expected of a precocious and self-centered child, his mind was soon a chaos of confusion in regard to religious matters which he could hardly have understood. He writes of himself, "Certain it is that my reading religious works, combined with my other readings, compelled me to feel strongly at ten years of age that there must be something

fundamentally wrong in all religions, as they had been taught up to that period." The religious revolution in Europe had long preceded him, but the effects of it left the boy in a state of doubt as to the identity of the one true religion and the one true church. The ghosts of Knox and Calvin were guilty again in the individual interpretation of a growing boy.

In the mature period of Owen's life the outstanding moral precept was to be that "a man's character is formed almost entirely by his early environment," and in his own case it is quite obvious that these early excursions into the realm of religious speculation were to leave an indelible mark on his character. The desire to learn more and more about the facts of history did not succeed in eradicating from his mind the childish preconceptions anent religion, and this desire for learning quickly gave way to a greater desire for teaching others what he had found. His was "free-thinking" that could be blamed on the growing fashion of the age, and it did the boy some good, and much harm. As Cole remarks, "Ill taught at school and from an early age scarcely taught at all, he was driven back on his own resources of acquisition. He read very widely, but on no system; he thought keenly, but under no discipline. He passed ideas into his mind, transmuted them, and made them his own, without regard for authorities or precedents."² All this must have left an impress on the mind of the boy, but greater still, and more important in the light of his future activities, were his experiences as a child laborer.

The custom of the time is well exemplified in the current attitude which allowed children to enter local workshops at ten years of age, and even younger. Owen was

² G. D. H. Cole, *Robert Owen*, London (1925), Benn, p. 32.

apprenticed to a draper, an honest and shrewd Scotsman by the name of McGuffog, whose large business was located in Stamford, Lincolnshire. It was a well-managed and fairly prosperous business house, and the boy found himself quickly acquiring a methodical and excellent training in all branches of the clothing trade. The work was not overburdensome, the master was kind and considerate, and as a result Owen was enabled to continue his investigations into whatever cultural activity came into his hands. The discovery of Seneca gave him fruit for pondering and meditation, and, as might be expected, the sustenance he received from the ancient pagan was somewhat lessened because of the poor digestive process of the reader.

A rather anomalous conclusion was the only one Owen could reach when he tried to please the religious urgings of both master and mistress of the McGuffog household. She was of the Church of England, and he of the Church of Scotland, and the boy decided to attend the services of both. The muddle in his mind became even greater, and the puzzle grew in intricacy, when he perceived that each sect claimed for itself to be in possession of the true religion. Studying more and more on his own initiative, the youngster came to two conclusions. The first was that neither Christian, Jew, Mohamedan, Hindu, Chinese, pagan, could be ascertained to be in the right; that was his agnosticism; he simply could not arrive at a position where he could say, "This is true, I am sure of it." The second conclusion he reached was a more insidious one, and could be directly traced to the Puritan aspect of current Protestantism. It was that piety is a sure guarantee of success, and that if a man is not successful, it is merely an indication that he is not living rightly.

This last tenet is one that must be kept constantly in mind when discussing men like Robert Owen and all the other self-made men in his and later times. Financial and worldly success was a direct mark of God's interest in any man. And though Owen was outspoken in discarding formal religion (where others simply kept up the exterior form), he believed always in the One Source of all religions, concluding that the variations he observed were due to social institutions and not to any particular teachings of the individuals who instituted and furthered religious sects. "My reason taught me," he says, "that I could not have made my own qualities—they were forced upon me by nature—that my language, religion, and habits were forced upon me by Society; and that I was entirely the child of Nature and Society; that Nature gave the qualities and Society directed them. Thus I was forced, through seeing the error of their foundation, to abandon all belief in every religion which had been taught to man. But my religious feelings were immediately replaced by the spirit of universal charity,—not for a sect or a party, or for a country or a color,—but for the human race, and with a real and ardent desire to do them good." This last was the great mistake to which Marx took exception—Owen was on the side of all men and would reach them through his universal charity.

I have no doubt that if Owen had not found the business of running mills and directing people of such absorbing interest, he would have turned to the foundation of some new religious sect; and would have made a magnificent success of it, as far as external prosperity has any bearing in religious achievement.

Finishing his apprenticeship with McGuffog, the boy

worked for a couple of years in the shops of other merchants and drapers before going to the very center of the cotton industry, the ill-famed city of Manchester. There he came into contact with ideas and habits of a diversified class of men, and soon immersed himself in what Podmore calls "the great industrial hurly-burly." Manchester and its neighborhood were already the manufacturing center of England, and had by this time taken over the commercial processing of cotton from its so-called status as a "cottage industry." Even when the cottagers worked for others they did so on their own spinning-wheels and looms, and worked in their homes. Until the invention of the fly-shuttle in 1738, the thread was still being passed through the warp by the weaver's hand.

* * *

The sins of the industrial system will always return, at least in their seminal stages, to the succession of men who rapidly developed the trade of weaving to replace the art of weaving. John Wyatt, Thomas Highs, James Hargreaves, Richard Arkwright, and Samuel Crompton were the men most responsible for the introduction of mechanical devices to supplant the work of hands, but the greatest sin is on the heads of men like Owen who organized factories and put men into a state of subjection to a hurtling shuttle. The spinning-jenny and the water-frame came into commercial use in the decade before Owen's birth. The speedy production of cotton twist in the new machines made a demand for a mechanized loom, and at the turn of the century the power-loom came into quite general use in Manchester.

Owen came upon the Manchester scene just in time to witness and take part in the industrial town's period of most rapid growth. Water power made Manchester a logical spot for the processing of cotton. The cotton business was itself becoming the key industry of a developing capitalistic system, and the main commercial enterprise in the world. The young Welshman was nineteen years old when he decided to enter the "muck and moil of the industrial whirl," and he did so by purchasing three of the newest machines (Crompton Mules), renting a large building, with a view to expansion, and hiring men to work for him. From the start his efficient management and full knowledge of the business put the shop on a prosperous basis.

The next step up the industrial ladder took place within the year, when Owen took over the management of a mill employing more than five hundred workers. The owner, a certain Drinkwater, was wholly ignorant of the process of cotton manufacture and shop management. Only a short time previous to this, Owen himself had been totally ignorant of the intricacies of machinery, but with his usual self-assurance had set to learning, and had mastered them, as he modestly admits, within six weeks. "I continued this silent inspection and superintendence day by day for six weeks, saying merely yes or no to the questions of what was done or otherwise, and during that period I did not give one direct order about anything. But at the end of that time I felt myself so much master of my position, as to be ready to give directions in every department." The man was never slow to admit his mental keenness.

He wisely learned, about this time, a significant secret of human direction which sometimes escapes the most experienced men; and that is the old adage of catching

more flies with honey than with vinegar. He was determined that gruffness and loud shouting, the external sign of anger, were very poor policy for a manager of workmen. But to explain this obviously politic attitude, he had recourse to his old principle of character formation by surroundings and circumstances. He says, "This knowledge of our common nature gave me the early habit of considering man the necessary result of his organization and the conditions by which nature and society surrounded him, and of looking upon and acting towards all in the spirit which this knowledge created. My mind, in consequence, gradually became calm and serene, and anger and ill-will died within me."

It seems that Owen had some slight inkling of what a machine-age would eventually do to the bodies and souls of men strapped to their monsters. He felt that his knowledge of human nature gave him an advantage over other managers and owners of factories, and that he could thus prevent the crowded and unsanitary working conditions of the shops from enervating, dehumanizing, and despiritualizing his workers. His management of employees was successful from both a financial and moral point of view, for they distinguished themselves in and about the town for their sobriety and good conduct. Owen is to be given credit in that he at least attempted to pay some attention to the "living" machinery he employed in the form of shop-hands, while at the same time, however, he paid a great deal more attention to the "dead" machinery, which was, after all, the real source of his mounting monetary profits.

Owen was on the make. His next step was the formation of the "Chorlton Twist Company," a combination of

two old and well-established firms, in which he was the general factotum, buying raw material, supervising manufacture, and selling the product. This enterprise finally brought him a wife, for on one of his numerous business trips to Glasgow, he made the acquaintance of the daughter of David Dale, owner of the mills at New Lanark, on the falls of the beautiful Clyde. Owen met the daughter but did not know the father—a rather strange occurrence in an ambitious young man of his nature. She would not have him as husband till he could obtain the consent of her father, and Owen felt the best way to make an impression on Dale was to write him a letter offering to buy his mills. The scheme did not work at first because there was a vast chasm of religious differences to be crossed. Owen worshiped in the chapel of universal charity, Dale was a rigid religious conformist. But the younger man's business acumen won over the astute Scotsman, and he soon took over the management of both daughter and cotton mills.

Here at last, was the opportunity for which he had been training himself and to which he could apply the full force of his social ideas. He called it the "government" of the mills, rather than the mere management of them. He planned to change conditions so that he could not only manage cotton production but also govern the lives of his employees. He intended New Lanark to be not only a money-making enterprise but also a laboratory for a series of social experiments.

The difficulties encountered in this industrial paternalism were typical of the times, and understandable in any period when the whole social circumstances of a people were undergoing gradual but radical change. Labor was scarce for the kind of work introduced in machine-tending,

and the result was the beginning of the evil of woman and child labor. Industrial servitude was a novel situation handled in a novel manner. The Poor Law authorities converted their pauper children into parish apprentices, and then sent them in scores to work in the textile factories under conditions approaching slavery. The famished peasantry of Ireland sent thousands of laborers to England, and thousands of crofters were being driven off their property in the Highlands of Scotland to make room for the "sheep-runs and deer forests for the rich." From sources such as these came grist for the labor mills of industrial civilization.

The countryside about the New Lanark mills was well adapted to agricultural needs, and thus proved a poor source of factory labor. The townspeople of Old Lanark had already formed a hatred for factory work and refused, whenever they could find other occupation, to enter employment at the mills. Men from the open highlands hated the confinement of machine-tending, and resorted to it only as a refuge from starvation. It is little wonder that Owen found the state of affairs among his workers somewhat disheartening. They were, he observed, drunken, thieving, immoral, filthy men and women, poorly housed and poorly fed, and at the same time "pretenders to religion, which they supposed would cover and excuse all their shortcomings and immoral proceedings." So he conjured up his old working principle which blamed the whole thing on Nature and Society.

According to this principle, factory hands were thus because they were the creatures of evil and vicious circumstances, whose characters had been formed by sordid surroundings. The remedy to his mind was quite simple.

One had only to change the conditions in which they lived and worked. "It is impossible," he wrote later, "that any human being could or can form his own qualities or character," and only a knowledge of human nature, such as he possessed, and an illimitable fund of patience, forbearance, and determination, could improve their conditions.

* * *

For eight years Owen devoted himself to laying the foundations of future progress, training the people in new ways, and improving both the village and the factory. The pauper children, of whom there were between four and five hundred in a village population of thirteen hundred, were his first concern. Under Dale's management they had received lodging and some attempt at instruction, an attempt which was futile because the children's bodies could not stay awake and alert for study after the exhaustion of long hours in the factory. Owen refused to take any more pauper children into the mills. This radical step toward reconstruction was followed by others concerning the men and women in his employ; and practically every step he made was met by opposition on the part of both workers and his father-in-law, Dale. During the American embargo in 1806, he finally won over his employees when he stopped the mills for four months, while at the same time paying them their full wages.

Owen's most interesting stunt in making efficient and God-fearing workmen of his employees is reminiscent of the more brutal device of espionage in modern plants. He arranged a so-called "silent monitor," a four-inch piece of wood, about two inches long, with a different color on

each face. It was suspended in a conspicuous place near each worker, and the color which faced out indicated the conduct of the individual on the preceding day. If the employee had worked badly, the black showed, if indifferently, the blue, if fairly well, the yellow, and if excellently, the white. Owen could tell at a glance when he passed through the mills just how each one was conducting himself. And the story has it that at first there were mainly black and blue monitors facing him, and that eventually almost all of them were yellow or white. Books of character were provided for each department, and a permanent record was kept of the daily conduct of all workers. The method was far from laudable, but it worked; and that was proof sufficient for a man of Owen's temperament to prove that it was a success.

Cleanliness was a fixation with Robert Owen. The paternal attitude he began to assume toward his employees prompted him to extend his program of sanitation from the factory into the private homes in the village. It was a case where the totalitarian idea became a nuisance to private individuals in that the employer began to assume responsibilities for every phase of the people's lives. The crusade was an undoubted necessity, for the workers themselves were either too lazy or wholly unable to provide better living conditions for themselves. Owen enlarged the workers' homes and built new ones, provided for the collection of refuse in the streets, and insisted on cleanliness within the homes. His was probably the first factory town to experience the advent of health visitors, "social workers," and the experiment met with the same reception it has had in more recent times. At first the company visitors were driven from the doors of private homes; but

gradually they made progress, and eventually New Lanark achieved the reputation of being the cleanest and most sanitary manufacturing town in the country.

Like every man with a mania for improvement, Owen felt himself qualified to set up his notions in the educational field. Here, they all believe rightly, is the cradle of future society; but it happens too often that these socially minded people have an altogether distorted interpretation of what society is, or should be. Owen wanted to give every child a good education before receiving him into the factory, and to this purpose he willingly expended much time and energy in putting his ideas into practice. He was convinced that the character of children would be improved and that this improvement would even reflect in the lives of their parents, but the economic angle of such expenditures as were necessary was worthy of consideration. "He had to remember," says Lloyd Jones, "that his partners went into business for profit as cotton spinners. They were commercial men, and it was to the annual balance-sheet they looked for satisfaction, and not to the character of the population employed in the mills."³ The driving force of his theories made him a marked man among the business partners.

Owen was headstrong enough to hold to his convictions that the expenses involved in all his plans, especially the educational scheme, were more necessary than the distribution of profits to the firm's owners. He insisted on the right to govern the factory and its workers as he saw fit, and he offered to buy out his partners, or sell out to them at a certain price. They accepted the former, and Owen

³ Lloyd Jones, *The Life, Times and Labours of Robert Owen*, New York, Knopf, p. 74.

then entered a new partnership, which, however, ended for the same reasons, and in much the same manner, only four years later. Finally he was fortunate in finding men who were quite in sympathy with his plans. The new partners were nationally known; the most prominent of them was Jeremy Bentham. Others were William Allen, lecturer, editor, and rich Quaker; John Walker and Joseph Foster, also prosperous Quakers; Joseph Fox, a Non-Conformist of some standing, and finally Alderman Michael Gibbs, a Tory and a pillar of the Church of England, who later became Lord Mayor of London.

The terms of the new partnership gave Owen the freedom of action he desired, for the firm was not founded primarily for profit. All surplus over five per-cent profit yearly was devoted to religious, educational, and moral improvement of workers and community. He decreased working hours to ten and a half daily, provided free medical attention, and started a Sick Club and a Savings Bank.

But the educational scheme was the great interest of his life at this period. On January 1, 1816, the new school-buildings were opened, and Owen delivered an "Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark at the Opening of the Institution for the Formation of Character," which was afterwards distributed in pamphlet form. He warned the audience that his new principles could be put into practice only gradually, and that the evil system of the past must not be overthrown too rapidly. "In establishing his new schools," writes Cole, "Owen conceived himself as laying the only sure foundation for a revolutionary change for the better. At the least, within a few years he had made them the most famous educational establishments in the

world, and a place of pilgrimage for enthusiasts from many countries.”⁴

It was this achievement of a wide public reputation, as well as another shadow of disagreement with a partner, that brought on the next phase of Owen's life. William Allen, one of the business partners, was a deeply pious person who looked askance at Owen's agnosticism, and who was horrified when he came to learn what he termed his dreadful and subversive views on religion. He thought that along with good cotton, Owen was very liable to manufacture genuine infidels in his New Lanark factory, and objected vociferously to the dancing, singing, and military exercises of the educational curriculum. However, the local clergy whom Allen questioned could report that there was no sign of Owen's irreligious views spreading among the workers, that, in fact, the villagers were an improved and sober lot under Owen's influence. Finally, a clergyman was requested to visit the schools regularly, dancing was not to be taught at the company's expense, and music and singing were to be replaced by “instruction in psalmody.” Kilts and dancing costumes were banned as indecent. All this would not go down with Owen who required an absolutely free hand in everything he did.

Before his departure from the active control of the New Lanark mills, Owen could truthfully feel that the venture was successful both commercially and educationally. But it was the kind of success that comes from the personal influence of one man, a type that has never been lasting when the principles behind it were not firmly grounded in the man's successors.

⁴ Cole, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

The first period of Owen's work at New Lanark was from 1800 to 1813, a time of hard and quiet endeavor by which he made of the mills a successful business enterprise. The second period, from 1813 to 1825, made for him a reputation as an apostle of social betterment. He was often away from the factory, lecturing on his social proposals, pushing them in every way before the public, and publishing his writings. His *New View of Society*, as well as *The Statement Concerning the New Lanark Establishment*, brought both Owen and his establishment before the public eye, and plunged both into violent controversies—the first the agitation regarding factory legislation and hours of labor; the second a religious controversy born of a remark made by Owen in the City of London Tavern to the effect that all religions of the world were false because they directed men's attention to superstitious imaginings or to vague speculations about an unknown future, instead of dealing primarily with man's social welfare.

Anent the first controversy, Owen decided to call public attention to the condition of the cotton trade and of the workers employed in it. He called a meeting at Glasgow to consider asking the government to remit the heavy duty on raw cotton and to take measures for improving the working and living conditions of people employed in the manufacture of various textiles. The proposal for remission of the tax was heartily received, but the request for improved conditions of workmen fell flat; it was not even seconded.

Factory owners had coldly rejected the plan nearest to Owen's heart. Since he could not bring them to improve conditions willingly, he decided to hazard the long road of political red tape. His proposal to the members of

Parliament is worthy of study particularly for the fact that it was fashioned over a hundred and twenty years ago to relieve a situation that still prevails in the cotton mills in parts of the United States. The points upon which he insisted were these: (*a*) Children were not to be employed in cotton or other mills of machinery until they were twelve years old. At that time they were sent to work at six or seven years of age. (*b*) The hours of work for all adult employees in the mills of machinery should not exceed twelve per day, one and a half hours of which were to be for meals and recreation. At that time the daily hours were usually fourteen, with one hour for meals. (*c*) After a period to be fixed, no child was to be admitted to work in the mills until he had been taught to read, to write, and to understand the first four rules of arithmetic; and the girls in addition were to be taught to sew.

Owen's bill also provided for government inspection on a more efficient plan than had till then been used, and that offenses were to be punished by fines, half of which was to be paid to the informer.

As was to be expected of politicians, the members of Parliament willingly promised that such a popular and necessary act would receive their full and prompt coöperation. Sir Robert Peel, member of the House of Commons, well liked by both Government and House, and himself an extensive manufacturer, willingly undertook to sponsor the bill. And there the matter stood. Useless discussions and endless objections made Owen restive and brought him up against the permanent question of government interference in private business. It is remarkable that the thing was considered at all in the liberal economic atmosphere of that day.

Owen felt that Sir Robert Peel could easily have carried the bill through both the House of Commons and House of Lords, and he truculently remarked, "It appeared afterwards that he was too much under the influence of his brother manufacturers; and he allowed this Bill, of so much real importance to the country, the master manufacturers, and the working classes, to be dragged through the House of Commons for four sessions before it was passed, and when passed it had been so mutilated in all its valuable clauses, that it became valueless for the objects I had intended." The measure, finally passed in 1819, of which Owen complained so bitterly, included only two of his proposals, and they in diluted form; it forbade the employment of children under nine years of age, and limited the work-day to twelve hours; and these regulations applied only to cotton mills. One wonders what the state of Owen's mind would have been had he experienced anything like a democratic American filibuster in the face of his bill.

But Robert Owen was receiving attention as a social leader, and he was next called to sit on a Parliamentary committee investigating the operations of the English Poor Laws and seeking a solution of the attendant evils. Owen's contribution to the solution was socialistic in that it called for government erection of a farm, or factory, in every county, and these were to provide employment for the poor. The people could thus support themselves and be kept from the dangers of idleness. Beyond the matter of employment, he outlined a plan for model communities to be placed throughout the land, in each of which there would be provisions for private sleeping- and sitting-rooms, and common halls for dining, cooking, recreation, and read-

ing, all in one vast building. Each community in his model plan would accommodate about twelve hundred persons, and together with farms and factories attached would cost the government about one hundred thousand pounds.

The plan became famous, and current reactionaries attacked Owen as an originator and instigator of a new socialist system, a charge which he could easily deny, since Thomas Spence had advocated common parochial occupation of the land in 1775, and an actual model for villages of that nature had been furnished as early as 1696 by the English writer, John Bellers. On the whole, the idea was popularly received, and the enthusiasm of newspapers led them to speak of Owen as "one of the most distinguished benefactors of the human race." According to Balmforth, "He was now regarded as the most popular philanthropist of the time, and his schemes commanded the sympathy of rich and poor alike."⁵ Strangely enough, his main opposition came from the camp of the Radicals, who were then in full cry for a reduction of taxation, and who feared that Owen's plan would add immeasurably to their tax burdens.

But the crest of the wave of enthusiasm broke when Owen decided to give vent to his theories on religion. The social reformer was stepping out of his field when he attempted to explain the falsity of religion, and it is estimated that three-fourths of his former friends deserted him for his rash remarks. It seems that he knew he was endangering his popularity, he even expected to be mobbed for it, but success had made him obdurate, and he went through with his speech at the London Tavern. He was

⁵ R. Balmforth, *Some Social and Political Pioneers of The Nineteenth Century*, London (1900), Sonnenschein, p. 77.

not entirely discouraged at the result, for he said that he “considered that day the most important of my life for the public—the day on which bigotry, superstition, and all false religions received their death blow.” Influential friends supported him for a while, but the practical application of his theories received a decided check in popular appeal.

* * *

Robert Owen is commonly considered the father of modern consumers' coöperation; and this is true only if we remember that his model communities of coöperation served mainly as an example of faults to be avoided by the Rochdale Coöperators and their followers. Many “villages” were established according to his plan, but he was directly connected with only two of them—New Harmony on the river Wabash in Indiana, and Queenwood, both of which failed. The American experiment was in the form of a village and its surrounding country, a tract of about thirty thousand acres, which he bought with all its houses and equipment for a pound an acre.

Podmore's biography of Owen gives two chapters to the New Harmony settlement, and explains in some detail the workings of its six departments: agriculture; manufactures; literature, science, and education; domestic economy; general economy; commerce. Each department had an intendant under whom there were four superintendents, who formed the thirty members, besides Owen, sitting as the governing council of the Village. Dissensions arose, and the drift went from communal to individual enterprise, till, in 1827, the Village was reorganized into a number of separate societies based on the occupational

group system. Finally, Owen had to admit failure and a loss of about forty thousand pounds, four-fifths of his whole fortune.

It is important to note the trend of Owen's personal interests and general influence from about 1816 onward. At that time his audience had been among the rich economic and political leaders of his country, and he was counted as a person of some weighty opinion; but from then on for the next fifteen years we can trace the gradual change in him from a successful and paternal employer of men to a Socialist agitator with deep-rooted convictions of his own. Out of his *Report to The County of Lanark*, published in 1821, there gradually evolved his comprehensive scheme for socialism and coöperation. By 1830 there were three hundred Coöperative Societies functioning on the Owenite principles up and down the country, but during this rapid growth Owen was absent from England most of the time, and never on the ground long enough to study and rectify the mistakes of his followers.

He came back to England when industrial workers were beginning to form a consciousness of their own and to search about for some means of alleviating their conditions. He was still of the opinion that if consumption of goods was to keep up with production, the wages of the worker must be increased. As Penty rightly remarks, he thought that "this was impossible so long as machinery remained in private hands; he concluded that our competitive system, based upon the private ownership of machinery, land, and capital, would need to be replaced by a Communist organization of society. . . From 1825 onwards, the currents of thought, generated by the anti-capitalist criticism of Owen and his followers, reached the thinking portion of

the working class and created Chartism.”⁶ A large number of workingmen’s societies had sprung up under his influence, at first for the formation of Owenite villages, but later taking over many of the functions performed by trade unions. Owen was himself always in favor of legislative and legal means for obtaining the needed changes in industry, but as Podmore points out, “Though Owen himself always looked for a peaceful settlement of all industrial crises by means of the equitable understanding between masters and men, it is probable that his teachings were largely responsible for the aggressive attitude of the working classes during these years.”⁷

It is quite true, therefore, that the militant trade union movement of 1832 was inspired by Owen’s doctrinal guidance even before he set out to lead the movement in the following year. Owen was never a man to do things by halves. His next proposal was to organize not only the workers into unions, but also the masters, and finally the whole government of England. He founded the “Grand National Consolidated Trade Union of Great Britain and Ireland,” which, though it quickly enrolled a million members, collapsed because of opposition by the government and the failure of several costly strikes. He broke with both trade unions and coöperative societies.

Owen’s next venture swept the whole world into his ken by means of his “Association of All Classes of All Nations.” It bespoke the enormous energies and the unspeakable pride of a man who wished through it to fashion an entire change in the condition and character of the

⁶ A. J. Penty, *Tradition and Modernism in Politics*, London (1937), Sheed and Ward, p. 25.

⁷ F. Podmore, *Robert Owen*, New York (1907), D. Appleton, Vol. II, p. 438.

human race. It smacks of the ambitious plans of Woodrow Wilson and his much heralded League of Nations, or of the fantastic scheme of Henry Ford to end the World War (get the boys out of the trenches) by Christmas. Another association was formed for the collection of funds, and then the two were amalgamated into "The Universal Community Society of Rational Religionists," and Owen was solemnly and seriously dubbed the "Rational Social Father."

The new religious movement caused a great stir throughout England. Pressure was brought to bear on Owen and his disciples by ecclesiastical and government authorities; prosecutions followed, and it was deemed advisable by the Rational Religionists to found a community at Queenwood. The experiment lasted only a short while, but in the meantime the fundamental idea of consumers' coöperation was at work in the minds of English workers.

When Queenwood Community collapsed, mainly through lack of funds, Owenism as a social system showed signs of falling to pieces. Owen himself was seventy-four years old. The vigor of his early years was gone; the rest of his days were spent in traveling and in developing a doctrine of Spiritualism as a supplement to his former pseudo-religious projects. His publications were many; the most comprehensive of them is *The Book of the New Moral World*, in which he stated his educational, moral, and religious theories, and the structure of his proposed communities. Other works are *The Marriages of the Priesthood of the Old Immoral World*, in which he denounced the religious basis of marriage as a menace to reason, *The Revolution of the Mind and Practice of the Human Race*, *The Coming Change from Irrationality to Rationality*, and

finally his *Autobiography*, which he did not complete. He died in 1858.

The books of Owen do not make easy reading. As Leslie Stephens writes, "He was essentially a man of one idea, that idea, too, was only partially right, and enforced less by argument than by incessant and monotonous repetition."⁸ His printed theses as well as his active participation in social reconstruction show that he was a man who had always to be the leader, and never the follower, in any movement. And despite frequent and loud protestations in favor of reason, he himself had the unreasonable human failing of a man who would believe only what he wanted to believe.

The fact is that his irrationality led him to squander a fortune in a self-evolved plan for the welfare of his fellow-men. As long as his directions were carried out he was a passionately benevolent man, and the latter years of his life show him as completely forgetful of the businesslike precautions that had made of him a commercial success in earlier ventures. The title of "Utopian Socialist" which Marx appended to him seems to me to have been well earned, for he was Utopian in that he believed people could do without political action and could even exist successfully as a communal group in an individualistic nation like England. He was socialistic, and the forerunner of Socialism, in that he wished to organize production and commerce for and by the people rather than for and by a distinct bourgeois class.

⁸ Leslie Stephens, *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XLII, p. 451.

CATHOLIC LAY LEADER

Antoine Frederic Ozanam (1813-1853)

SOMEWHERE IN HIS WRITINGS NICOLAS BERDYAEV HAS made the statement that a sociological theory of morality ought, if it is to be consistent, recognize society as God, and not as a natural and historical part of a world plunged in sin. And the important point in that remark is its significance in a widely current conception of society. All have bowed down to man as a social being, and have quite forgotten that he is at the same time a spiritual being. As a mere social entity, man can investigate the world about him and gradually become aware of changing popular conceptions of good, but it is only as a spiritual being that he can know and grasp the good as such.¹

Something of this idea must have been in the mind of Antoine Frederic Ozanam, professor of Foreign Literature at the Sorbonne, and one of France's leading Catholic laics. A century ago, Ozanam was in close touch with all the stream of ideas emanating from, and improving upon, the French Rationalists and Liberalists of an earlier day, and he was keen enough to appreciate the direction in which

¹ Cf. Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, New York (1937), Scribner, p. 28.

these ideas were leading his fellow religionists. The thought of man as a social being is a most important one, but that he is a spiritual person with a spiritual destiny is one that Ozanam kept always to the fore of his mind. Nor did he go, however, to the opposite pole of discarding the social aspect for the spiritual. The evidence of this nicely balanced social philosophy lies in his generous endeavors on behalf of the poor and downtrodden.

A century ago the French attitude toward spirituality in the religious sense was that of hostility rather than of smug indifference, as we know it today. The intelligentsia, associates of men like Ozanam, discountenanced religion entirely as a means of overcoming the patent social evils of the time. They thought of it as a mere stop-gap, a sop to be thrown wailing children who knew of no better remedy; for these "scientists" there was no remedy but that which the Goddess Reason would provide in the form of theoretical schemes in political as well as economic fields. Society, as a sort of personified entity, was the thing to be saved, but in the practical working-out of plans, Society was left to flounder badly without the assistance of spiritual sustenance.

Besides the savants of the period, there were also the members of the moneyed and commercial classes who saw nothing of worth in spiritual values. The evils of society were to be combated simply by a revision of national policies, a freedom from economic restraint, and not at all by direct action for the alleviation of the poor, who, after all, usually make up the distressed portion of a nation. To them all, Ozanam made it plain that personal service, both spiritual and material, was the means to bring them a brighter social outlook. "Go and make friends among the

poor"; he said, "give to each family what personal help you can. A better training enables you to assist them; in one place it will be by legal advice, in another medical. To some you may give practical advice, for others you may procure work. In all cases help them to help themselves, and consider it your prime duty, whether you take them tickets for relief or not, to render them some personal service."

* * *

The French ruled the city of Milan when Ozanam was born there on April 13, 1813, and despite the eleven-year-old Concordat between Pius VII and Napoleon, the lot of his religiously minded parents was not a happy one in that city. Napoleon was near the end of his rope. In the following year his dream of world empire crashed around his head, and in 1815 Waterloo put a definite end to his power and influence. When that took place the Ozanam family sought a more secluded home, and moved their bags and baggage to Lyons.

It was on the whole a distressing period, this era of Napoleon's fall, and it was particularly distressing to the body of Catholics who were faithfully adhering to the old régime. Paris was the vigorous center of infidel politics, and the hospitable entertainer of Voltarian societies. But the spirit of the age was not all the immediate result of immediate causes. The French revolution of 1789 had so demoralized the nation that its effects were reëchoed in almost every line of thought and action. Society was physically, intellectually, and spiritually depressed, and the concept of living was distorted so that Catholicism in its pure form was pushed to a desperate struggle for survival.

Cardinal Manning was of the opinion that "The youth of France were the offspring of the infidel University of the First Napoleon," and the destructive influence under which they were formed was counteracted neither under the Restoration nor under the reign of the citizen-king, Louis Philippe. These youthful Frenchmen were fashioned into a society which was secretly incredulous, and though they were all nominally members of the Catholic Church, society as a whole was openly derisive of the spiritual values which the Church held so highly. There were then three general classes of Frenchmen, within the broad confines of which fell practically all the youth of the day. The first was not very numerous, but had a large influence; it consisted of non-Catholics who had no faith whatsoever in religion or its practices. The second was a rapidly diminishing number of Catholics, perfectly trained in the creed, code, and cult of the Church, and who exemplified perfect fidelity to her. The third was a fast-growing group of so-called liberal Catholics who were in some degree or other affected by the *Zeitgeist* of their radical fellow citizens; men of the type exemplified more recently in the famous *Action Française* group.

As for the formal structure of the Church in France at the beginning of the century, there was not a very bright prospect in view. The hierarchy was functioning in a half-hearted manner and mostly from under cover; the great religious houses with their armies of monks, priests, and nuns who had made of France the glorious elder daughter of the Church were closed. Their former occupants were scattered all over Europe, or, if any remained in the country, were forced to perform their beneficent ministrations secretly.

Contemporary political and national events were of an unhealthy hue. Napoleon had made the agreement with the Holy Father solely with a view to strengthening his own position and employing it as an instrument of political action. When the eagles of Napoleon had fallen for the last time, the Bourbons returned to begin all over again where they had left off, neither learning nor profiting from the events of the past. Because of them there was again resurrected the idea that Catholicism was necessarily identified only with those political parties favoring absolutism in opposition to the newly formed and powerful adherence to liberty. Jansenism and Gallicanism, so potent in weakening the spiritual position of the Church during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, showed signs of again rearing their scraggy heads. There was also the disturbance of the July Revolution by which the legitimist Charles X made way for Louis Philippe, historically known as the man-made "King of the French by the will of the people." Eighteen years later, at the middle of the century, he abdicated to allow the formation of the Second Empire.

Five years after this occurrence, Ozanam passed away at the early age of forty, but he had lived long enough to crowd into his life more activity than a man twice his age commonly experiences. All during his lifetime there was a constant duel being waged between those Catholics who were willing to march with the times, and those who disregarded the portentous rumblings of democracy inherent in the French Revolutions. The former were of the mind of the Church in maintaining themselves in readiness to accept what was legal and moral and evidently advantageous in the new society gradually emerging from cur-

rent political upheavals. The latter group were die-hards for the idea of monarchy, sympathizing with the throne, for the most part because they saw in it a stability necessary for the restoration of the Church to its pristine position in French affairs.

Besides these very interesting and exciting outward activities, all of them influencing Ozanam, there were other and more personal influences at work upon the formation of his character and outlook. His father was a profoundly charitable man, of ancient though doubtfully noble lineage, who gave much of his physical energy and financial resources for the assistance of the underprivileged classes. In spite of his many misfortunes, "his faith in God," as his son wrote, "never grew dim, nor did his character ever lose anything of its uprightness. He cherished a high ideal of justice and felt a boundless spirit of charity for the poor...he was able to infuse into his children something of his own enthusiasm for everything that is uplifting and beautiful." The influence of his mother was also of mighty import in giving him an imitable example of goodness and kindness. She was a cultivated, high-minded woman, who worked almost always with the hope of assisting those less fortunate than herself or her family. But the fact is that neither father nor mother of this extraordinary family pursued their external charities at the cost of their own offspring. The instance of such socially minded people is not uncommon.

Another home influence was that of his sister Elisa, older than Frederic, and leading him, during his childhood, with the grace of wholesome kindness. In his usual warm-hearted love for his family, he summed up these three members of his family in this way: "As a child, God

placed me on the knees of a Christian father and a saintly mother. As my first teacher He gave me a sister as intelligent and good as the angels."

Teachers, too, outside the home circle, were a fortunate lot in Ozanam's younger days. The scholarly Ampère, at whose home in Paris he lived while a student there, was an example of simple faith and a paragon of scientific knowledge, whose happy combination of childlike faith and powerful reason helped the young man over some difficult spots in his life. The avidly historical Chateaubriand, from whom he learned to love the past without developing too great a trepidation about the future, taught him to hold fast to tradition without impeding the march of progress, and showed him how to seek authority for support while at the same time holding firmly to the principles of liberty. Other prominent friends of Ozanam give his coterie almost the cadence of a *Who's Who* among the French savants. There was the great Lamartine, a fool for generosity to the poor; Saint-Beuve, a cold and critical logician who wished to know the whither and wherefore of every problem; Hugo; the Abbé Gerbet, whom Ozanam thought the most gentle of men; finally there was the incomparable Henri Lacordaire. Such the familiar faces with whom the youthful scholar moved in daily work and converse.

* * *

Ozanam did not plunge into the great works of his life without experiencing moral and religious doubts that come to every thoughtful youth at some period of his formation. He was only fifteen, and still at Lyons, when he first noticed that it was the fashion of the day to discuss, with

cold reason and an unprejudiced view, of course, the tenability of religious dogma. He was shaken to the core of his being; at one time an outright skeptic, and finally again, a reasoned believer. This stage lasted for three years and came about by "hearing people continually talking about unbelief and unbelievers." As he himself said, "I began to ask myself why it was that I believed at all." Fear is the beginning of wisdom; for him, doubt was the foundation of a sound faith. "I began to doubt, although I wished to believe. Putting aside my doubts, I eagerly read all books in defense of religion, but they none of them completely satisfied me. For a month or two I believed in the authority of some piece of reasoning, then a fresh objection would rise up in my mind and I would begin to doubt again. My faith lacked all solid foundation and yet I preferred to believe without reason rather than doubt. But this was too great a torture. I entered the philosophy class. The thesis on certainty upset me. For an instant I fancied that I should be obliged to doubt even my own existence . . . I clutched desperately at the sacred dogmas and seemed to feel them crumbling in my hands. It was then that a philosopher priest saved me . . . sensible of my rare good fortune, I then promised God to dedicate my whole life to the service of those truths which had given me peace."

Unlike most adolescents who make similar promises after a long siege of doubt and temptation, Ozanam actually carried out his self-dedication in a very few years after he had made it. His first attempt at making a living was as a clerk in an attorney's office at Lyons. There he perceived that men of lesser mental caliber than himself fell into the same difficulties, but had not the same good fortune of extricating themselves, or of finding some one

to direct them along the reasoned path to certitude. Many of them, he noted, whole-heartedly embraced false notions of irreligion and skepticism. In 1831 he conceived the plan of forming a group of young men who would be of mutual assistance and encouragement in religious practices, and social minded enough to extend their activities to others.

His own experience had been a harrowing process, and before it could grow cold, the thought struck him that he could preserve his rediscovered treasure of faith much more ably with the help of similar youths. "Happy shall I be," he said, "if a few friends come and rally round me. Then we should unite our efforts and create a work together; others would join us, and perchance the day would come when all mankind would be gathered together beneath the same protecting shade..." That all-embracing shade was, of course, the communion of saints, the Mystical Body of Christ on earth; but the youth was somewhat vague as to the form his group should take, and had not yet devised the foundation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. But from this point in his life Ozanam was definitely launched upon a vocation of leadership in Catholic Lay Action.

Indirectly, then, there came another impetus from an entirely unexpected source. The pseudo-religious and economic doctrines of Saint-Simon were rapidly becoming popular in all parts of France. Even Carlyle had marveled at his proposed priesthood of savants, and his ideas were spreading to other foreign thinkers. It is Saint-Simon, for instance, who was the originator of the famous phrase, "To each according to his capacity, to each capacity according to its results," which became, in various forms, the tool of socialists, democrats, and communists, from that time

forward. He was the forerunner of modern Socialism, and the appearance of three of his ardent disciples at Lyons caused Ozanam the greatest perturbation.

The official organ of these Lyonese agitators was the *Precursor*, and through its pages they blatantly advertised their own scheme for the resuscitation of fallen humanity, making false accusations against Christianity in general, and Catholicism in particular. Ozanam took up the cudgel of the press and retaliated with *Some Reflections on the Doctrines of Saint-Simon* which was favorably received by the public and highly complimented by Chateaubriand. It was not simply a refutation of an erroneous doctrine, but was at the same time an apologetic for the benefits accruing to civilization through the activity of Christianity.

The Saint-Simonists followed the ever effective way to popularity by appealing to the sense of liberty in the masses. All restraint should be thrown off and the government of man taken over for the benefit of man; naturally, for them, the priesthood of the Church was confounded with the governing classes, and Christianity was a stumbling block with its doctrine of universal brotherly love and its adherence to a policy of non-resistance to evil. Ozanam argued that it was this very Church which had loosened the fetters of slavery and shaken the entrenched forces of despotism.

In the Christian past, he writes, "The Emperor Theodosius does penance in sackcloth and ashes for the massacre of his rebellious subjects. Clovis and all his people are baptized, great princes kneel at the Communion rails by the side of their most humble subjects, the same cross is placed over the tombs of the high-born and the lowly. Charity and the love of man for man! This precept pro-

duces martyrs and makes saints like Vincent de Paul." This was the precept which he saw as the crying need of the day. What to him, or to any one seeking a surcease of wrongs in France, could the cold seizing of power mean, unless it were accompanied by a principle that would make that seizure lastingly effective for all men?

While he never discountenanced planned and proven social methods, Ozanam thought them all void of permanent benefit unless moved by the spiritual force of charity. This force was more successful than any other temporary expedient in bringing rich men to the help of the poor. As he said, "It builds hospices, and develops a sense of compassion for the sick and ailing. It gives bread to the widow, a home to the orphan, and a place of refuge to the penitent sinner. It destroys the spirit of hatred, places a priest between two enemies eager to rend each other in pieces. Between Christian kings, when discord causes them to regard each other as foes, it places as a peacemaker, the Pope." The ideal of charity, then, was the moving force which raised all lesser activities on behalf of the poor to a place of importance.

* * *

Ozanam and his group of young friends thus knew what their guiding principles were to be, but they had as yet not formulated any clear-cut program of action. As university students at Paris, they met occasionally to discuss religious and social issues, and seemed to be more successful in stimulating interest in the former than in the latter. At one of their meetings in 1833, when Ozanam was only twenty years old, they protested vigorously against the irreligious

teachings of certain professors of the Sorbonne, and in particular were they virulent in their objections to Professor Jouffroy who held the chair of philosophy and boasted that he could disprove the possibility of Revelation.

The youths' method was one usually based on the historical approach in which they showed the past accomplishments of Christianity. But some one, weary of these protestations of the *laudatores temporis acti*, demanded to know what was being done in the present. "Ozanam," the unknown shouted, "you are right when you speak of the past; in past centuries Christianity has done wonders. But what is it doing for mankind? And you too, who pride yourself so much on being a Catholic, what are you doing for the poor? Show us what practical benefit the working-man reaps from your religion and we too will believe in it." Here is a challenge that has been hurled at religious-minded social workers for a half-century by rabid Communists and Socialists, and it is really no different from that heard by vociferous spellbinders throughout the centuries.

It was a question either of backing down entirely from the position he had taken, or of doing something about the challenge. Ozanam and his friends took the harder course. As the recognized leader of the group, Ozanam proposed weekly meetings in which they would combine their defense of religion with the more tenuous program of social betterment, a united action in the performance of tangible social duties and charitable good works. Instead of wasting breath on their former scholarly but vapid discussions, Ozanam told these men, it would be far better for them to form a society of their own "and concentrate our energies on relieving the troubles of the poor. We shall reap

a greater spiritual benefit ourselves and shall also be able to show unbelievers the practical values of Christianity in the world to-day." With that statement he took the only logical step which can follow from profound conviction. It was a hard step, one which very often meets with opposition of the forces supposedly aligned with each other in the uplifting of man. It would have been much easier to sit at the scholar's desk penning indictments against the sinful world and advising others how to perform the dirty work of reconstruction.

Out of this determination grew the great Vincent de Paul Society, with its present membership spreading all over the world and numbering about 150,000 active persons, and still carrying on Ozanam's scheme for organized Christian aid for the poor.² Archibald Dunn's sixty-year-old book on Ozanam contains the story of the Society's birth and growth, a story which is still of absorbing interest to social workers. The method of the Society's procedures and the effectiveness of its program of disinterested relief is still used as a model by professional relief administrators. Only recently a social worker of many years' experience in this field told me that the Vincent de Paul Society was the model, and by far the most efficient type, of the many relief agencies.

At its formation in 1833, its first eight members met in the offices of a newspaper editor, M. Bailly, who took a paternal interest in his young co-religionists, and struck the very key-note of their activity when he told them: "If you are in earnest about serving the poor as well as yourselves, you must not let it be a mere doling out of alms, bringing

² For a modern example of the work of Vincent de Paul Societies cf. Lucey Lawrence, "Relief and The Church," in *The Forum*, New York, May, 1938.

each your pittance of money or food; you must make it a medium of moral assistance; you must give them the alms of good advice." We come back again and again in the short life of Ozanam to this central idea. Man is not merely a social being, he is first and foremost a spiritual person, and whatever assistance he needs and deserves for his bodily comfort must also be fortified by that of the spirit. Any other motive in a Christian social worker is hardly worth his effort.

In going about their first visitation of the poor in Paris, Ozanam and his followers had the guidance of a Sister of Charity, Sister Rosalie. Perhaps it was the inspiration of this selfless nun that guided them also in the choice of St. Vincent de Paul as their patron and namesake. Ozanam's idea was, after all, merely a resuscitation of the *Conférences* of that outstanding Apostle of Charity of the seventeenth century. It was a further development, modeled to the use of the laity, of the spirit of charitable devotion which already existed in De Paul's spiritual children, the Sisters of Charity. The group's meetings, too, were called "*Conférences*" in imitation of the Saint's usage in that they should confer with each other for their mutual aid, and should confer upon the recipients of their charity the benefit of their personal attention. A man's own personality should be injected into important and valuable work of this kind, and Ozanam, though a prominent man of letters, and a busy University professor, continued always to take a very personal part in its work.

Albert de Mun, who must be remembered as a leader of the Catholic Movement for social reform in France, hardly exaggerated when he said that "The Conferences of the St. Vincent de Paul Society were the great school of ex-

perience in which we first learned to serve the cause of the people. Out of them sprang the whole Catholic Social Movement of the nineteenth century." The Societies became the one outstanding instrument in remolding the people of France along more Catholic lines. Through its fundamental principle of love of God and man, its spirit of conciliation, its actual philanthropies, the St. Vincent de Paul Society proved a potent obstacle to the spread of irreligion, skepticism, and class prejudices engendered by the French revolutionary movement. Ozanam was not ahead of his time, for no one who deals with contemporary problems is before his time, but he did somehow presage the principles of social reconstruction later so widely spread by von Ketteler, the belligerent Bishop of Mainz, and by Leo XIII in the *Rerum Novarum*.

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Undoubtedly the poor will always be with us, but it seems that poverty is always a concomitant of unrest in the ranks of the laboring masses. The poor must be aided, but the more logical arrangement of affairs is to search out and remove the cause of poverty, and it was at this point that Ozanam again ran into the arguments of Socialism. Up to that time, Liberalism, both economic and social, had been the order of things for those who ordered things in Europe, but now the principles of Socialism threatened to become the vogue. Especially were they gaining ground among the workers. The criticisms of Sismondi were being promulgated, the Utopian Socialism of Robert Owen was becoming known in France, Charles Fourier's fantastic plan for the reconstruction of society had gained a large coterie

of enthusiastic followers, and Louis Blanc was establishing his reputation as a popular leader who would have to be reckoned with in future political and social readjustments.

Long before the Revolution of 1848, Ozanam recognized that the greatest social problem of the day was not one of individual persons or of politics, but one of labor. His recognition of this fact does not give him credit for any especial astuteness; any one who had his eyes open to the changes that industrialization was causing in the working conditions and in the social habits of the laboring classes could have made the same observation. But Ozanam was no scholarly economist. He did not offer his own pet scheme for fighting the evils of mechanization, but he did wish to point out to those who could do something about it that the real future problems of government would be those of labor. There would have to be a revolutionary change in the attitude of officials toward such questions as wages, industrial expansion, and economic concentration.

He pointed out the moral angle, and insisted also that the social debacle involved the personal and spiritual order of man and the entire financial, commercial, and industrial arrangement of the country. He was always for the middle of the road in the solution of these questions, just as the complete Catholic must always remain, and looked first of all to the preservation of the integrity of the family as the essential source of all communities.

As at almost every point of historical controversy in economic matters, there were in Ozanam's time two parties of extremists. And, as in every case from early ages down to the present time, these parties were contradictory in their proposed solutions for the economic problem; generally speaking, the one was extremely liberal, and the

other outrightly authoritarian. The first saw man's destiny on earth as a full and pure enjoyment of the material things of the world, the other made of man a machine of production and saw that function as his end and all; both of them, differing merely in the paths they chose, led society into the same morass of materialism.

On the matter of labor relations between employer and employee, with all its intricate arguments about wages, hours, and conditions of labor, he put above all else the thought that the worker is, because of his very creative function, possessive of a high dignity. Work should not be of one methodical, long-continued routine, such as is enjoined upon industrial employees. Wages must be more than a *quid pro quo*, more than an exchange of a unit of production for a unit of time, or more even than a personal, living wage; he foreshadowed modern Catholic exponents of labor betterment by demanding that a family wage should be paid a family man. Further than that, Ozanam anticipated the various forms of coöperative industry that were springing up in England at that time, by asking that there be developed some type of profit-sharing between employer and employee. In denouncing exploitation and family disintegration, his language was popular and incisive, and by it he called attention to the faults within the laboring masses as well as recognized expropriation on the part of industrialists. The ideal he sought for in government intervention is one that still elusively misses our fingers, that is, a proper balancing of liberty with authority on the part of political measures.

The personal enthusiasm and devotion of the members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society were making themselves felt wherever the men carried on their work. In their fre-

quent contacts with the poorer classes, and through the use of the press, their influence was spreading. But Ozanam felt that the views and works of his group could not have their full effectiveness till they had enlisted an eloquent and popular orator to give his energies to the cause of social enlightenment. As he said, they needed a man who was "well versed in the most recent scientific discoveries, orator enough to attract large audiences of the educated classes, and able to contest successfully the theses of the opponents of Christianity, and to fight them with the same weapons of science which they themselves used." He thought that his search for the fitting man had ended when he found Henri Lacordaire, but the Archbishop of Paris withheld his consent for the appointment of this cleric for the type of work Ozanam suggested.

However, after outlining his plans and the reasons for asking the assistance of Lacordaire, and after presenting to Monseigneur de Quelen, the Archbishop, a petition signed by two hundred prominent Catholics of Paris, Ozanam won the ecclesiastical approbation, and the appointment was made. Young Abbé Lacordaire was appointed to Notre Dame, where he inaugurated the annual series of lectures on vital subjects, a series which is still carried on in our own time. To these lectures he drew, at one time or other, Victor Hugo, Berryer, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Saint-Beuve, and a large host of other notables. That day marked the beginning of a revival of Catholic life in Paris, a revitalizing of men's ways of thinking on public topics; and the credit for this phenomenon is divided between Lacordaire's Conferences and the work of Ozanam's St. Vincent de Paul Society.

At the age of twenty-four, Ozanam took his degree of Doctor of Law at the University of Paris. It seems a young age for any man to receive that high distinction, but it is even more admirable when the fact is known that he did not specialize in the study of law. The educational methods of the day, and Ozanam's own intellectual application to the study of collateral subjects of interest, had given him a well-rounded and integrated education. Literature, foreign and French, history, philosophy, and theology were fields in which he felt himself completely at home, if not in the specific knowledge of their minutiae, at least in broad and necessary outlines of problems. All this contributed to his able pursuit of the vocation he had made for himself in the field of Catholic lay leadership.

His first professional assignment was that of instructor in Commercial Law at Lyons, a position which he achieved partly through the influence of his friends M. Cousin and young Count de Montalembert. The first was known as an eminent and capable philosopher, while the latter was at that time the foremost protagonist of Catholic rights and privileges in the House of Peers. Ozanam continued his studies in languages, and two years later received the degree of Doctor of Literature which obtained for him a lectureship in that subject at the Sorbonne. When the famed Fauriel died, Ozanam succeeded him in the Chair of Foreign Literature at the Sorbonne. He was then only thirty-two.

The position he held at the Sorbonne entailed many difficulties for a man of Ozanam's sturdy religious and philosophic beliefs. Several of his associates were out and out pagans and were never slow to rationalize on the so-called failure of Christianity, both as a philosophy and a

religion. And Ozanam was fully aware of this state of affairs, for in a letter to M. Lallier just before taking up his position at the Sorbonne, he spoke of the new surroundings as "the slippery ground of the capital," and it was as much as his charming personality and heroic boldness could do to keep a firm footing. From this period till his death there were two things which made his career a short one; the first was a rapidly failing health, and the second was a steady increase in the amount of work he accomplished. Instead of caring for his health, he allowed himself to be drawn into an active part in the epoch-making events near the mid-century. The result was that he died only a dozen years after his marriage, and at the early age of forty.

During the summers of these years he often traveled in Italy, where he visited Pius IX just after his election in 1846; in England, where he studied the most recent developments in social and political thought and action; and in Spain, where he gathered material for the historical works he was composing. At home, besides eloquent lectures in the University and innumerable meetings and discussions in promotion of the St. Vincent de Paul Societies, he edited in conjunction with Père Lacordaire a newspaper advocating the principles of Christian Democracy. He participated actively in the Revolution of 1848 as a citizen and writer, but the failing human body could not stand the strain of so rapid a pace, and in the end he simply burned himself out. He died on September 8th, 1853.

Ozanam's reputation as the leading historian and literary critic of the Neo-Catholic Movement in France rests upon the monumental works he produced in his last years. All of them deal with the early times of the Church's

great influence, and were written with one end in view: to demonstrate the benefits Christianity had provided for civilization. In *The History of Civilization During the Fifth Century*, he states as his objective: "It is the doctrine of progress by Christianity that I attempt to bring back as consolation in these unquiet days." He carried on the same thesis, and proved it with success, in *The Christian Civilization of the Franks*. Another field in which he made a noteworthy contribution to the interpretation of Catholic history came through his study of Italian, a language which he taught at the Sorbonne. *The Franciscan Poets of Italy During the XIIIth Century* is in the main an apologia for the perennial truths of Christianity.

All these literary endeavors proved a powerful incentive in turning the stream of French thought back into the channels from which it had wandered. The social and spiritual significance of his achievements were based on his returning to the pure source of society and spirituality which obtain in the principles of Catholic thought. The day had come in France when such studies and interpretations were vital to the very life of Catholicism, and the appearance of Ozanam seems a divine intervention when we consider how greatly his influence molded the thought and action of his contemporaries.

The personal characteristics of Ozanam are two that would grace the personality of any man in any age. They are those usually applied to the man who is called a gentleman, in the true sense of the term. They are sympathetic understanding and genuine modesty, the fundamental traits of true gentility. Ozanam's sympathetic attitude toward his suffering fellowmen was manifested in his quick and ready understanding of the problems of laboring men

and in his tender solicitude for both the material and spiritual welfare of the poverty-stricken. The spirit of self-effacement, of course, must never extend to a sacrifice of principles, and he showed that he had the happy balance of mind to perceive where to strike a blow and where to mend a breach in his antagonist's armor. A genuine indication of his humility is his refusal to accept the presidency of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, a position he felt would become a means to personal glory in his life.

Finally, Ozanam's influence, too, may be divided into two categories, specific and general. The particular influence was exerted over his intimates and associates in philanthropic work connected with the poor. This became general only after his death, in the world-spread of the Society he founded, which is now a quietly functioning unit of innumerable Catholic parishes. It is social in that it fills a vital need for society in its material aspect; it is spiritual in that it ever puts the needs of the soul above those of the body. The second influence rises from his scholarly attainments, including as they do all his literary, apologetic, and doctrinal activities. And this, too, has been imitated by educated Catholics all over the world who are now acting in the capacity of leaders of lay action. Wherever the storm of anticlericalism, unbelief, and carelessness of spiritual values seems to be taking hold, the first thought of ecclesiastical authorities is the formation of a group of men fashioned along the lines of Frederic Ozanam.

Hughes speaks of him as a "fine example as a lay apostle of Christ, in a university chair, which has proven a source of inspiration to many." This appraisal of Ozanam does not exaggerate the title he has won as the great forerunner of contemporary Catholic Lay Action.

THE SOCIALISM OF A PROTESTANT

Charles Kingsley (1819-1875)

THE FALL AND THE INCARNATION ARE THE PIVOTAL points of all history, and it seems to me that a man who calls himself a Christian must have been somehow acquainted with that fact even in early childhood; that an ordained minister of the Gospel, professing a social theory pretending to solve the problems of industry and society, should call it into doubt is utterly incomprehensible. Yet Charles Kingsley, who as a popular author and lecturer was a potent force in forming "the social conscience which was to transform the economic viewpoint of the generality of Englishmen," was an Anglican clergyman who thought the Fall a merely *probable* event. He started one of his lectures with the words: "The more I have contemplated that ancient story of the Fall, the more it has seemed to me within the range of probability."¹

If you are a materialist, you will of course say that any discussion of fundamental facts such as the Fall and the Incarnation in connection with social problems is just so much wasted breath. If you do not admit the Fall and the

¹ Charles Kingsley, *Health and Education*, London (1879), Macmillan, p. 52.

reality of original sin, you will not understand why men sometimes act as viciously as they do; if you do not admit the great truth of the Incarnation, it will be a mystery to you why men sometimes act as angelically as they do. With these two Christian doctrines held high as a guide-light, all the nonsense of evolutionism and determinism vanishes into the thin air.

Kingsley should have known better. He had a mind capable of unusual development, and he had at hand the opportunities to develop it. But he had also an unreasonable confidence in his own infallibility that prevented him from reaching a true estimate of the difficulties standing in his way, and of the roots and causes of those difficulties. As his correspondence shows, Kingsley started out on his journey of reform with a prejudiced and unalterable theory of society. Leslie Stephens, a man near to his times, wrote of him, "He intended, it is true, to perfect himself in a few branches of study which he had hitherto neglected; he was to learn something about metaphysics, theology, ecclesiastical history, and other branches of knowledge; but it quite plain that Kant and Augustine and other great teachers of mankind were to be called in, not to consult upon the basis of his philosophy, but to furnish him with a few tools of polishing certain corollaries and increasing his dialectical skill."²

This reflection on the clergyman's mental status is not a hyperbole, nor is it inconsistent with the high praise that must be accorded him. He was dubbed a Christian Socialist, but he was no more thoroughgoing Socialist than he was thoroughgoing Christian. It happened that the conditions

² Leslie Stephens, *Hours in a Library*, London (1899), Smith, Elder, Vol. III, p. 33.

of the masses in industrialized England had come to such a pass that any normal human being, whether Christian or Socialist or whatever else he was, could not help seeing them. It was a mere accident that Kingsley used the language and weapons of Chartists and Radicals. Having a bent for reform, he used them because they were the readiest at hand.

Sixty years ago C. Kegan Paul pointed out that Kingsley seems to have had political instincts, but no political principles, and these instincts pulled him in two different directions at the same time, to both the mass and the class. It is reminiscent of Stephen Leacock's confused character who jumped onto his horse and rode madly off in all directions. But Kingsley's zeal died down, and the last twenty years of his life were practically fruitless in the matter of social reform. As Paul wrote three years after Kingsley's death, "when once the strong excitement was past which drew him away to become a Christian Socialist, his hereditary tendencies inclined him to a certain lofty but always beneficent rule of the lower orders by the higher. These being his political instincts, he satisfied the contradictory feeling, which had been developed in him, by his deep power of sympathy, by his conception of the great theological kingdom, in which the equality of men before God by no means upsets their inequalities in regard to each other."³

To Catholic minds—and they are the only minds that have retained in these days a true understanding of the necessity of belief in Revelation—Charles Kingsley must ever stand as the symbol of bigoted Protestantism. To them the bigotry of nineteenth-century England and the

³ Kegan Paul, *Biographical Sketches*, London (1888), Kegan Paul, Trench, p. 125.

theology of nineteenth-century Protestantism combine to form a breastwork obscuring the genuine contributions he made to social betterment. His vicious and illogical attack on Newman might readily be pardoned in that it was the harbinger of the latter's remarkable *Apologia*, but what good purpose was served by his *Westward Ho!* no one has ever discovered. Besides these two incidents, some of his Cambridge lectures likewise reflected discredit upon his previous worthwhile achievements. A truly great writer and a truly great social theorist conforms his beliefs to reality, he does not argue from the theory to the fact. Kingsley failed miserably in this when he got into the realm of religious thought. His method was "too much tainted by the obvious tendency to see facts by the light of preconceived theories."⁴

Despite numerous glaring faults, there were also many admirable qualities in the "complex and many-sided personality" of Charles Kingsley. For a period of his life he was the best known and most popular clergyman in England. Sincere in his convictions and courageous almost to the point of folly in expressing them, he was personally attractive enough to draw thousands to his Cambridge lectures and tens of thousands to his program of Christian Socialism. But contradictory characteristics in him existed side by side. His sympathy for the poor was almost feminine in its tenderness, while his violence in uttering his opinions was often harsh and insolent. Lovingly devoted to his friends, he was relentlessly furious to his enemies, the protagonists of "popery"; and flashes of genuine intellectual brilliance were quickly snuffed out by a plethora of stupid emotionalism.

⁴ Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

In his activities in behalf of the English workers, Kingsley has been termed a mere popularizer of the views of Frederick Maurice. He was definitely more than that. In a study of Christian Socialism, Charles Raven says of him, "Without him the movement might not have started at all; . . . and without him it could never achieve its speedy recognition or its lasting effects."⁵ To realize the manner in which he reached a position of such importance that he could affect a whole historical movement it is quite necessary to understand the interests of his life up to the point of the attempted Chartist petition to Parliament in 1844.

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At that time Kingsley was only twenty-five years old. He had been born in 1819 at his father's vicarage in Dartmoor, Devon, of a well-educated father who had no small gifts as linguist, artist, and naturalist, all of which abilities, his precocious son later declared, were never properly put into use. Concern for the social problems of his day was probably the thing furthest from his mind, and from this source the son learned nothing to his future purpose. From his mother, however, the boy inherited an exuberant enthusiasm that later stood him in good stead, and an artistic appreciation and ability that carried on into his literary achievements.

During his adolescence—that is, from his eleventh to his seventeenth year—Kingsley lived in an environment which undoubtedly left a profound impression upon his malleable character. His father had been called to the village of

⁵ Charles Raven, *Christian Socialism, 1848-1854*, London (1920), Macmillan, p. 97.

Clovelly in North Devon where the boy came into intimate contact for the first time with humble men doing humble work. It ought to be a prerequisite for every sociological student that he have a close view of the struggle for existence such as these energetic fishermen supplied for young Kingsley. They were miserable in their work, and the pittance they were able to wring from their trade hardly provided them with the necessities of life. For six years the boy mingled with them and developed at first hand the sympathetic interest in the condition of the "underprivileged" that stayed with him during the rest of his life.

The next move was occasioned by the Reverend Kingsley's promotion to the rectorship of Chelsea, whence the son entered King's College. These changes of his family about the English countryside helped the boy to obtain a rather wide experience of people and conditions which does not ordinarily come to the lot of the young. From one parish to another he observed the characteristics of people close to the soil, close to the sea, and in the towns and hamlets. An incident which set him to keep thinking at this time was the rioting at Bristol. It awakened in his sensitive nature a feeling of horror, though it undoubtedly at the same time broadened his knowledge of the extents thwarted humans will go when aroused by injustice.

At Magdalene College, Cambridge, Kingsley joined an intellectual ability that was above the average to a spirit of comradeship that made him very popular among the students. It was a time when religion and the tenets of theologians were heatedly discussed among undergraduates just as to-day the topics of women and liquor hold their attention. He entered whole-heartedly into these

debates and came for a while into a serious dilemma as to whether he should go over completely to the atheists, or become a Catholic. Eventually he did neither. The Tractarian movement was in full progress, and the students at Cambridge, already disturbed by religious doubts and by the vacillating conduct of their leaders, were deeply disturbed by it.

At this period Kingsley met Fanny Grenfell, his future wife, who led him to the sources which were to root him firmly in Anglicanism, and, at the same time, provide him with the social theories he popularized. Through her he learned to know the works of Carlyle, Coleridge, and Maurice, and thus was soon able to overcome the dread temptation—the notion of Rome. He never succumbed completely to the idea of State Socialism of Carlyle, but he did succeed in obtaining an appreciable direction and lasting inspiration to plan for the rehabilitation of society.

Coleridge's influence on Kingsley was of a spiritual rather than social nature in that the young student seemed finally to sense that in Coleridge's concept of Christianity he had found a complete and perfect philosophy. Though Carlyle's *French Revolution* had a great effect in strengthening what spiritual principles Kingsley had formed, the religious effect of reading the works of Coleridge and Maurice was one that lasted through his whole life. Of Maurice's volume, *Kingdom of Christ*, he declared at a later period, "I owe more to it than to any other book I have ever read." And it was undoubtedly due to Maurice's influence that he decided to put his religious scruples at rest by entering the Anglican ministry.

That he carried over and developed Maurice's spiritual interpretations is evident. Stephen says of him, "Briefly,

Kingsley's remedy for speculative error was not the rejection, but the more spiritual interpretation, of the old creed; and his remedy for bad squires and parsons was not disendowment and division of the land, but the raising up of a better generation of parsons and squires." ⁶ In 1842 he took orders and received his first curacy at Eversley, where he married Fanny Grenfell two years later. His presence in this hitherto neglected parish of Hampshire was almost immediately felt in the improvement of his neighbors' living and working conditions. He was particularly successful in drawing young people to him, and in showing them ways and means of bettering themselves.

When a man takes unto himself a wife, it is to be expected that he will absorb and reflect much of her personality. So it was with Kingsley. Not that it is possible to put one's hands on this or that definite characteristic of the man and acclaim it the result of his wife's influence. His idea of a country clergyman ever remained that of a model husband, and pastor of his people. After his death, the companion of three decades published the *Letters* and *Memoirs* of his life and showed, at least by implication, that she had followed his work very closely, and aided him no little in his difficulties.

In 1844 Kingsley had formed the acquaintance of Maurice and Ludlow, an event which placed him on the threshold of his most intense years of social endeavor. But to understand better his part in the Chartist movement and the evolving of Christian Socialism, a glance at his correspondence will be of revealing assistance. The letters written in quiet moments tend to bring out the personality of a man better than the words spoken in the heat of contro-

⁶ Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

versy. One is often led to speech that is regrettable and which would never have been uttered after sufficient reflection. In them Kingsley showed himself an exuberant and youthful enthusiast for whatever reform he had in mind at the moment; and that is a worthwhile quality, provided that the cause in which it is expended is likewise worthwhile.

At the same time, he was surprisingly inconsistent in the aims and methods he embraced. Whether the thing he had in mind was feasible or whether it was impossible, the quality of his zeal stood out vividly. For instance, there is a marked difference between the man who wrote the sociological novels *Yeast* and *Alton Locke*, and the man who wrote the early *Saint's Tragedy*. There is inconsistency in calling himself a feudalism at one time and a Chartist at another; there is intensity and restlessness expressed in almost every one of his letters and lectures. He was at the same time sensitive and violent.

Kingsley went to great lengths to justify himself in anything he did or said and, as a result, made an especial laughing-stock of himself in his unfortunate controversy with the learned Cardinal Newman. In general, his reasoning power was more energetic than logical, and in the face of opposition from men like Newman he could not but be worsted. Of his particularly glaring defects, Raven has this to say: "No one can read his contributions to the *Christian Socialist* without feeling that he is sadly lacking in balance and judgment, that his love of argument often led him into quite untenable positions, and that his recklessness and dogmatism might easily have done irreparable damage to the cause... His exegesis shows how far he had failed to understand the historical method and is at

once shallow and unsound; his arguments are clever and sometimes suggestive, but their ingenuity does not conceal their want of foundation, and their rather blatant self-assertion is in rather painful contrast to the humility of his teacher (Maurice). They are Kingsley at his worst, patronizing and didactic, impatient and often insolent to his opponents, and constantly exposing himself to well-earned and unanswerable retort. They reveal in him just those faults which his subsequent career made so notorious; and in view of them we cannot altogether regret the fact that he dropped out of the movement before he found Newman to bring destruction upon him and it together.”⁷

As his letters and the writings of his last years indicate, he became mellowed and tranquil. With the quiet that comes to the most energetic of men in their declining age, Kingsley regretted some of the brash utterances of his youth. In a letter to J. M. Ludlow, a fellow churchman and one of the first figures in the Christian Socialist movement, he later admits of a change of perspective. “For myself, on looking back I see clearly with shame and sorrow, that the obloquy which I have brought often on myself and on the good cause, was almost all of it my own fault. I mean the proud, self-willed, self-conceited spirit which made no allowance for other men’s weakness or ignorance; nor, again, for their superior experience and wisdom on points which I have never considered—which took pride in shocking and startling and defying, and hitting as hard as I could, and fancied blasphemously, as I think, that the Word of God had come to me only and went out from me only.” The evident honesty of this admission, and the courageous idealism that is patent in Kingsley’s attempts to

⁷ Raven, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-1.

help the downtrodden, temper the critic's justified impatience with the man.

Of course, it is essential to remember that although a wife may be her husband's severest critic in life, usually, after his death, she turns panegyrist. And so it is with Mrs. Kingsley in her memoirs of her husband. Likewise is Kaufman eulogistic in his work on Kingsley, going a great deal too far when he compares the Protestant minister to Lacordaire, Ozanam, and Montalembert. To Kingsley the comparison with these Papists would have been ironical, if not extremely distasteful. Yet there may be a grain of truth in it, for Newman, whether over-charitable for the dead or perfectly objective, we know not, declared in a letter that Kingsley was gradually coming to the Catholic view of things. Charles Devas in the *Dublin Review* wrote that Kingsley, after the publication of the *Apologia*, seemed "gradually approaching the portals of Holy Church, but was cut off by a premature death."

* * *

Charles Kingsley stands in an odd position among the schools and scholars of social-minded Englishmen. All of them were concerned over the fundamental question of individual liberty and state action, and among the older Liberals and Radicals there was a constant tendency to increase the former and weaken the latter. This is especially true of the Manchester School who considered liberty the center of all things, social and political, and it was precisely this group to which Kingsley was unalterably opposed. As he said of them in 1852, "of all narrow, conceited, hypocritical, and anarchic and atheistic schemes of

the universe, the Manchester one is precisely the worst. I have no words to express my contempt for it."

Again, there was a social force inherent in the utilitarian doctrines of the Benthamites which Kingsley rejected because he did not see liberty as the road to "the greatest happiness for the greatest number." He insisted that there was no true freedom without virtue, and told the workingmen of England, "do not humbug yourself into meaning 'license' when you cry for 'liberty'." It was a period when Liberty, better interpreted as "Liberalism," was the temper of all groups of social reformers, and it lasted well past Kingsley's death. He stood somewhere between the extremists despite his admission of radical tendencies, and he did his most effective work at a period when radicalism threatened to force an English revolution.

Like every important reform movement, Christian Socialism grew out of a crisis. In 1848 the Chartist agitation in England became an acute problem among the workers, while the February Revolution in France saw the establishment of the Second Republic. The conditions among the English workers, depicted so poignantly by Dickens, were indeed frightful enough to provoke an armed rebellion, and the wonder of it is that the uprising did not take place. Leaders of both Church and State seemed indifferent to the degradation of humanity all about them, and it was only the increasing restlessness of the laboring masses that made them take notice.

The rise of industry had taken place so suddenly and with such complexity that all classes of society were bewilderedly unprepared to meet it. Particularly the men who could have formed the backbone of resistance, the Anglican clergy, had sunk to a new ebb of spirituality.

Tractarians and Evangelicals vainly attempted to revive it, but succeeded only in forcing a divorce of religion from the realities of life and a working alliance between reformers and secularists. Anglican Bishops had been chosen for the most part either because of birth or because of political service, or, as Raven suggests, because they were known to be "sound and sleepy."

The secular doctrines of Jeremy Bentham and his followers gave a spurious guarantee to Liberalism, and the enthusiasm of whatever *laudatores rerum novarum* there were was quickly dampened by the chilly dogma of social determinism. That political action could come to the help of the downtrodden was a forlorn hope in the hearts of English workers, for they knew too well the foibles and corruption of political officialdom. But the Chartists thought they saw a gleam of hope when they organized in 1838, a gleam which within a decade flared into the blaze of the London agitation. Their idea of presenting a petition to Parliament ended rather ingloriously when Feargus O'Connor, their leader, abandoned the throng in its wild procession and demonstration of April 11, 1848, and admonished the workers to return to their homes.

Thus broke the wave of Chartism for all practical purposes, but the wild demonstration was the incentive for Kingsley, Maurice, and Ludlow to spring into action. The result was Christian Socialism. As Ludlow wrote, "A new idea has gone abroad into the world. That Socialism, the latest-born of the forces now at work in modern society, and Christianity, the eldest-born of those forces, are in their nature not hostile, but akin to each other, or rather that the one is but the development, the outgrowth, the manifestation of the other, so that even the strangest and

most monstrous forms of Socialism are at bottom but Christian heresies. That Christianity, however feeble and torpid it may seem to many just now, is truly but as an eagle at moult, shedding its worn-out plumage; that Socialism is but its livery of the nineteenth century (as Protestantism was its livery of the sixteenth) which it is even now putting on, to spread ere long its mighty wings for a broader and heavenlier flight.”⁸

This new idea is couched in lovely language, but it is as incorrect as any false doctrine has ever been. Kingsley himself was in accord with Ludlow in trying to idealize a society that was sorely in need of fundamental principles. The organization of the Chartists and the antics of the workingmen were disgusting to his sensitive nature, but the sympathy he felt for the workers' suffering was genuine enough to bring him wholeheartedly to their support. In the formulation of Christian Socialism he was at all times in close contact with his venerable adviser, Maurice, who in February of that year had expressed the opinion that socialism would “have to be Christianized or it would shake Christianity to the foundation.” And these broad-church Anglicans were not astute enough to realize that a man cannot be at the same time a true Christian and a true Socialist.

Kingsley's first activity in the new movement was to write a proclamation to the “Workmen of England” in which he declared a sympathy for their grievances and a warning against violence. It was the first of the famous series written by him and signed “A Working Parson,” or “Parson Lot.” The Society for the Promotion of Work-

⁸ J. M. Ludlow, “The Principles of Christian Socialism,” *The Christian Socialist*, Vol. I (1850), p. 1.

ingmen's Associations was begun, a school (which still exists) was set up in London, and a periodical for the promulgation of their objectives was inaugurated. Regarding the name of this latter work, Maurice wrote to Ludlow in 1850, " 'Tracts on Christian Socialism' is, it seems to me, the only title which will define our object, and will commit us at once to the conflict we must engage in sooner or later with the unsocial Christians and the unchristian Socialists." In a letter to Doctor Jelf, Principal of King's College, he further explains, "We did not adopt the word 'Christian' merely as a qualifying adjective. We believe that Christianity has the power of regenerating whatever it comes in contact with, of making that morally healthy and vigorous which apart from it must be either mischievous or inefficient. We found from what we know of the workingman in England that the conviction was spreading more and more widely among them that law and Christianity were merely the support and agents of Capital. . . We wished to show them both by words and deeds that Law and Christianity are the only protectors of all classes from the selfishness which is the destruction of all. So far as we can do this we are helping to avert those tremendous social convulsions which, as recent experience proves, may be the effect of lawless experiments to preserve property as well as of violent conspiracies against it."⁹ Thus in Maurice's words are expressed the prime objective of the new movement, the double task of socializing Christianity and Christianizing socialism.

The manifesto written and posted by Kingsley to the workmen of England is an important document more for

⁹ Frederick Maurice, *The Life of Frederick D. Maurice*, New York (1884), Scribner's, Vol. II, p. 92.

its ultimate effect than for its immediate content. It was the first phase of the movement which eventually awakened the Church of England to a new sense of its social responsibility. It has been called—since its author was a clergyman—"the first manifesto of the Church of England—an act of reparation for the years of neglect." In it are found the features of Charles Kingsley's program: opposition to all forms of violence, and an insistence on the double standard of individual reform and industrial freedom.

The clerical socialist became a propagandist of the first water when he assumed the pen-name "Parson Lot." He had compared himself to Lot, lonely in the cities of the plain, and felt that his was almost a lone voice shouting for social reform. In his first three letters to *Politics for the People*, a periodical of the Christian Socialists, he enlarged some of his previous statements. "My only quarrel with the Charter is that it does not go far enough in reform. I want to see you *free*, but I do not see that what you ask for will give you what you want. I think you have fallen into just the same mistake as the rich, of whom you complain—the very mistake which has been our curse and our nightmare. I mean the mistake of fancying that *legislative* reform is *social* reform, or that men's hearts can be changed by Act of Parliament. If any one will tell me of a country where a Charter made the rogues honest, or the idle industrious, I will alter my opinion of the Charter, but not till then."¹⁰

In these letters are contained all the force and fury of a man unreasonable in his demands and unstable in his

¹⁰ Charles Kingsley, *Alton Locke*, Prefatory Memoir by T. H., London (1911), Macmillan, p. xii.

philosophical footing. In them he referred to the Bible as the "Reformers' Guide," believing that all the answers to all economic and social problems are contained therein, making the same mistake as the "complete" moralists of our present day, who insist that problems will vanish if all men are moral. *Politics for the People* lasted through only seventeen weekly issues, but in that short time it had an undoubted influence in peacefully tiding over a serious social crisis.

In the summer of 1849 the meetings of the Christian Socialists included the Chartist leaders, many workmen, and especially a great number of tailors. It is necessary to understand the temper of the times to appreciate the furore caused by Kingsley when he stood at one of these assemblies and said, "I am a Church of England clergyman and I am a Chartist!" Shortly after that he put out his most famous pamphlet, *Cheap Clothes and Nasty*, in which he presents a graphic description of conditions in the sweated industry, roundly charged the competitive system as the source of evil, and offered some points for the sharing of profits in the Socialist manner. Briefly, they are: (*a*) let no Christian disgrace himself by dealing at any "slop-shop"; (*b*) let the workmen realize that competition is ruining them, and that the remedy is association and co-operation; (*c*) let a few men who have money help and foster the growth of association. It does one's heart good in an age of sophistication to follow the vividly convincing style of a man who was emotionally aroused over the sufferings of humanity. The pity of it is that he had not a more solid platform from which to vent his spleen.

In *Frazer's Magazine*, during 1848, Kingsley had published *Yeast, A Problem*, dealing with the evils of contemporary rural life, but it had not gained much notice. In the meanwhile, he suffered a nervous breakdown as the result of his intense propaganda work. In the ensuing enforced leisure he had the opportunity of finishing *Alton Locke*, a novel which swept up a storm of invective against its author, while it shook the aristocratic smugness of the nation's leaders.

Alton Locke is a tremendously effective book, and as I closed it, even eighty years after its publication, I thought that here, but for the chance of his less fortunate birth, is the person who would have been Charles Kingsley. It is as personal as it is intense, and the sensitive nature of its author peeps through many of Alton's actions. "I am a Cockney among Cockneys"; the story starts, "Italy and the Tropics, the Highlands and Devonshire, I know only in dreams. Even the Surrey hills, of whose loveliness I have heard so much, are to me a distant fairyland, whose gleaming ridges I am worthy only to behold afar." And this opinion must remain despite the fact that Carlyle wrote to Kingsley, "Your book is definable as crude . . . the impression is of a fervid creation still left half chaotic."

The novel centers on the evolution of Alton Locke from sweat-shop tailor to Chartist leader, a story I have heard in echo from the several labor-union organizers it has been my pleasure to know. In its unfolding we find an aggregate of social evils startlingly similar to those extant in modern industrialized society. Housing conditions in the slums, unsanitary workshops, atrocious pay for health-breaking labor, degrading effects of industrialism to women, futility of government reform attempts, the need for individual edu-

cation and regeneration; all this makes a powerful though unpleasant picture of society. Little wonder that in this sense Carlyle found it crude.

Nothing more satisfactory for the Christian Socialists could have happened than the storm of protest aroused by this novel. It gave the little group the advertisement it needed, made the leaders jubilant over the triumph of publicity, and brought Kingsley into immediate national fame. The *Edinburgh Review* scathingly criticized it in thirty-three pages, and the *Quarterly* was even more vehement. Years later Kingsley admitted that while the movement had brought calumny and loss on most of the leaders, and practical persecution on Maurice, he himself had acquired a reputation and an assured position. Be that as it may, Kingsley is the publicist who made possible the success of Christian Socialism.

Seeing the effect of *Alton Locke* on the minds of his countrymen, Kingsley, in 1851, republished *Yeast, A Problem*. It too received much the same reception as was afforded the tailor's biography. In this novel the author moved his scene into the English countryside, made famous in poem and story for its quiet beauty, and proceeded to strip the glamour from agricultural life. He gave a cross section, showing the slatternliness of the rural home, the harm of indiscriminate almsgiving, and the necessity for reform of the game laws. At the same time he offered no particular solution to the problem, stating that it was his desire to present conditions as he found them and allow the novel to act as yeast in the minds of his readers.¹¹

¹¹ Charles Stubbs, *Charles Kingsley and the Christian Socialist Movement*, London (1892), Methuen, p. 69.

Stephen says that "Nobody can read the descriptions of the agricultural laborers in *Yeast* without recognizing both the strength of his sympathies and the vigor of his perceptive faculties."¹² But again, no Catholic can read *Yeast* without being disgusted with Kingsley's crude and irrelevant attacks on Roman Catholicism. It brings to the fore the intense bigotry that even his most ardent admirers would not forgive in Kingsley, and again it is genuinely autobiographical, for it harks back to his days of religious agitation at Cambridge.

Maurice in a letter to Kingsley expressed the opinion that the work was too popular and respectable, but the High Church periodical, *The Guardian*, was quite of a different mind, and condemned the book on the grounds that it encouraged youthful profligacy. This was the beginning of a strong campaign by the religious press against the *Christian Socialist* and the aims of its founders.

But the laboring masses of England welcomed Kingsley to their midst and demanded to know his remedies for the agrarian problem. The result was a program for rural improvement that was distinctly socialistic: (*a*) attraction of city dwellers to the farm; (*b*) the development of new products; (*c*) associations for profit-sharing; (*d*) model communal houses with a common kitchen attached; (*e*) a superintendent to whom the workmen should be wholly subordinate. Even the *Guardian* gave him a modicum of praise for these propositions, but very little was eventually done in putting them into practice.

Christian Socialism was all the while expanding, and soon included many men of importance in English public life. But the radical ebullience of Kingsley had done its

¹² Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

work, and now that there was need of quiet, reasoned planning for the continuance of the movement, he gradually withdrew from active participation with the leaders. He was still the curate at Eversley vicarage, and his duties to his parishioners, as well as those to his family, directed his attention there. Furthermore, he was honest enough to foresee that his influence might be more injurious than beneficial in the work of the others. He wished to relieve them of the embarrassment of his presence, but he continued his writing and lecturing in the interests of social reform in general, and followed the movement with full interest.

* * *

Kingsley had shot his bolt. In the remaining twenty years of his life his interest changed from general social reform to particular sanitary reform, and besides his work in this field he produced a steady stream of novels, poems, and essays. In his historical novels he seemed to have become reconciled to the world, while he changed from a denouncer of social evils to a praiser of the landed aristocracy. Certainly it was not that he had grown mellow with age; he was not old when he died. The ancient prejudices were apparent in the inaccuracies of both *Hypatia* and *Westward Ho!*, and a close scrutiny by competent historian or literary critic would show that Kingsley was molding men and events in conformity with preconceived theories.

However, these obvious defects do not detract from the fact that Kingsley was sincere in his lectures on the necessity of sanitary reform. He spoke frequently and boldly for the improvements of drainage, ventilation, and water-

supply which moderns take as a matter of course. A lecture at Bristol in 1857 showed the transition from the rabid radical to the public-spirited parson. At every opportunity thereafter he preached on the joys of cleanliness, advocated education in hygiene and medicine for women, attacked the government for its unsanitary system of water-supply. All these seem trivial from the modern coign of observation but to Kingsley they were the passion of life, and he lived to see many of his proposals put into practice. As a matter of sober history, moderns may well attribute to him the advance made in health education during the past fifty years.

Finally, in reviewing the life and labors of Charles Kingsley as a whole, it is necessary to admit that he was a decided influence in social reform, and it is interesting to note that his influence emanated not from the basic principles he avowed, but rather from the ability of his own fervid nature to crystallize into glowing language his personal impressions and the sentiments of the masses. To the movement for Christian Socialism he gave generously of his undoubted talents as a propagandist, and the fact that his active participation in the movement was of short duration does not lessen the importance of his contribution. Any new enterprise needs the verve and vigor of an imaginative and picturesque initiator, and it is for this reason that Kingsley was of immense value to Maurice and Ludlow. Besides awakening the social sensibilities of Englishmen in general, he had a peculiar penchant for attracting and keeping the attention of youth. It was this factor in his personality which kept Christian Socialism alive among a younger generation.

Kingsley declared that it would take two generations of

constant education before the principles of coöperative association could take sufficient root in England, and it is easily apparent to-day that Christian Socialism, at least in that economic phase, failed precisely because it did not accomplish that education. The contract system which he had smitten hip and thigh died a natural death through the Crimean War. Further solutions of the Christian Socialists failed because of the practical difficulties to which they gave rise.

In the perspective granted by the ninety years that have passed since the Christian Socialists started out to solve the problems of the world, society has become vastly more complex. Some of their problems have been solved, but the fundamental one of social injustice still remains. Be that as it may, the work of Charles Kingsley was on the whole a genuine contribution to the improvement of man's relation with man. His mistakes were the mistakes of every demagogue to tread the earth, but the hand he had in rousing social interest in English problems more than made up for them.

THE SOCIALISM OF A CATHOLIC

Wilhelm von Ketteler (1811-1877)

WILHELM EMMANUEL VON KETTELER WAS A German Baron, descendent of a long line of honorable and aristocratic forbears. But that must not be held against him. He strove mightily to live down the traditions of his class by leaning over in many cases to the socialist interpretation of trends rather than to the landowner-capitalist view. Socialism in its irreligious aspect drew his criticism, but he was less antagonistic toward its aspirations than he was toward the forthright evils of individualism and *laissez-faire*, and as a consequence of this attitude he was often charged with attempting to inflame the masses of workers against the existing order of society.

Von Ketteler is a man much to be admired, and the mere accident of his birth in a noble family is the least reason for that admiration. It has often been a source of wonder to me, and of irritable personal reaction too, that a man who has made himself prominent in the defense of the downtrodden should be excessively praised because he did not spring from the ranks of those same downtrodden. The so-called American democratic tradition has been only too slow in changing the attitude of people toward the

accident of noble birth. And even American authors seize upon that fact as a choice morsel and devote many irrelevant passages to expansion of the topic. Hagiography in particular has suffered horribly from it. Travelogues of Americans who have traveled in Europe seem uninteresting to their authors unless they can describe their dinner parties with some duke and duchess, unless there is a count and countess to slip into every few pages. But most of all, biographies contain undue emphasis on such inconsequential data of a man's life; and I pray that the biographers of a man like Chesterton will not, at least in this respect, give a misinterpretation of the man we knew.

However, in the case of von Ketteler the really significant characteristic is that he had a perpetually pugnacious stance in the presentation of his thoughts. It was not a trait that developed in his parliamentary practice and public debates; it was apparent even when he was a youngster at the Jesuit College at Briez in Switzerland. Four years of the Jesuit system put him into a more orderly way of acting, making more pliable, but not exterminating, the combative tendency which appeared now and then in later life. At Göttingen, where he started his university career, he lost the tip of his nose in a duel, and that incident was probably more effective than anything else in slowing him down during the rest of his student days at the universities of Berlin, Heidelberg, and Munich. Then for seven years von Ketteler practiced law with such evident gusto that he declared "it would take a greater miracle than raising the dead" to make him change his profession.

His latent and native belligerence was brought to the surface in the so-called Cologne Event, when the Archbishop was arrested and imprisoned on the charge of con-

spiracy against the Prussian government. This incident irked von Ketteler because of its downright injustice, and the climax came when his cousin, Ferdinand von Galen, was dismissed from the diplomatic service at Brussels for refusing to make official communication of the charges against the Archbishop to the Belgian Court. In one of his letters at the time he wrote, "one must have a very good stomach to digest the bile stirred up by such infamous acts." He resigned his career in the law courts of Prussia as a position morally untenable for him, discussed the situation long and earnestly in Munich with the Catholic lay leaders, Görres, Windischmann, and Phillips, and in Eichstädt with Bishop Reisach. The miracle needed to change his profession seemed in the offing, and after a retreat with the Jesuits at the University of Innsbruck, it occurred. He decided to study theology in preparation for the priesthood.

* * *

To any one interested in the symbolism of numbers the career of Wilhelm von Ketteler should be a mine of study. Dates divisible by the number eleven would be the focal point. He was born at Münster in 1811, was thirty-three when ordained to the priesthood in 1844, and just twice as old when he died at the age of sixty-six in 1877. He was born when Napoleon was temporarily the master of his native city, and died just a year before his friend, the great Joachim Pecci, ascended the Pontifical throne as Leo XIII. Whatever case may be made out for a Pythagorean interpretation of the dates in von Ketteler's life, and for a credence in their symbolic meaning, there was otherwise nothing mystical or obscure in the man himself.

Physically he was tall, muscular, and rangy, a powerful masculine figure with the clear-cut features of the man of action. While still a government official, and even as a student of law and finance, he had been wont to attack a problem with blunt directness. The ideal he held before him even then was the moral and social improvement of the common people, but he was not the one to approach it from a visionary or sentimental angle. What might now be termed "hard-boiled" is the best definition of the manner in which he used his wealth of good, practical common sense. "Bishop of the Workingmen," the name later earned through his stormy and passionate defense of their interests, was the title he loved best. There was none of the mustiness of false idealism about him. He knew what he wanted, and though not always correct in details of the solutions he offered, he was especially delighted in controversial debates with worthwhile adversaries.

That von Ketteler was more in the apostolic tradition of St. Paul than in the modes of the contemplative life does not make his character the less edifying. By this I do not mean that he was guilty of the modern heresy of the active apostolate, which is all too common among energetic people, and which implies that mere activity can clear up the problems of the world. The error does not take prayer and prayerful thought seriously into consideration. It forgets that men and women in the best apostolic tradition, Paul, Dominic, Xavier, and Theresa of Avila, and all the others who have performed signal social deeds, prepared themselves by an intense meditative process. On the modern scene this truth must frequently be reëmphasized. Christ spent his days in active social work, but the long hours of the night he gave over to thoughtful prayer.

Thus it was that his follower, von Ketteler, achieved much outwardly in the politics and economics of Germany by drawing upon the inward secret reserve of prayer.

The priest in politics has become the bugbear of modern Catholics—as though politics lies outside the realm of religious principles, as though a clergyman may not be at the same time an astute politician, critical citizen, and worthy churchman. Von Ketteler had no scruples about entering German politics, but he put first things first. As he said at that time, “Only religious motives could induce me to step out of my spiritual calling for a season.” He had been zealously following that spiritual calling until in 1848 his Catholic fellow-citizens elected him to represent the district of Tecklenburg in the assembly of the Frankfurt Parliament. In the assembly he at first took part in discussions only when their issue concerned Church or School, but outside the assembly he first aroused public interest by a moving eulogy at the graves of Fürst Lichnowski and General von Auerswald, victims of revolutionary terror.

It was a trying time all over Europe, this year of revolution in France, and von Ketteler saw in this funeral oration an opportunity to lay down the principles for which he stood. He proclaimed that he was as much the servant of the people as were the socialists and revolutionists. “I believe,” he said, “in the truth of all those sublime ideas that are stirring the world to its depths today; in my opinion not one is too high for mankind; I believe it is the duty of man to realize them all, and I love the age in which we live for its mighty wrestling for them, however far it is from attaining them.” In the same breath he denounced the irrationality of both conservatives and revolutionaries in fostering the competitive spirit, man’s evil

passions, and the general avarice of society. The cry for peace, equality, and brotherhood, he stated, could be answered only by the removal of these obstacles.

Two weeks after this much publicized oration von Ketteler attended the first of the now famous Catholic Congresses at Mainz, and there, in an extempore speech, inaugurated Catholic attention to the social problem. He surprised his audience whose minds were long focused on individual problems by asking that they take up the study of social conditions, a "most difficult question, which no legislation, no form of Government has been able to solve." He felt, as many serious thinkers to-day feel, that only the Catholic Church can permanently put an end to the distress of the masses. He waxed eloquent, "The people are in sore distress, the starving laboring masses, whose ranks are swelling from day to day, are raising their voices in protest and demand. How can we prevent them from hurling themselves upon society, whose victims they call themselves or believe themselves to be?" Here, in this first meeting at Mainz, von Ketteler became a prophet and inspirer of the social movement among German Catholics. He was the spark that lit the conflagration, and if he had done nothing else, would by that mere fact be an important figure in the movement.

The next step in a still unformulated program was an explanatory series of six speeches delivered also in Mainz, and treating the Catholic teaching of the right of property, the liberty of man, the destiny of man, marriage and family life, and finally, the authority of the Church in social matters. The celebrated *Communist Manifesto* had been published in London by Marx and Engels in February of that year. The revolution in Germany had taken

place in March. The scene of social history moved forward, and at the end of the year von Ketteler's six discourses were the first reasoned refutation of the unscientific socialism of the *Manifesto*. Possibly he was one of the few men who then recognized the significance of both the social problem and the communist solution; more probably, he was the only person then qualified to make a direct stand against the opponents. At any rate, his six sermons at Mainz are still considered the first adequate Catholic attempt to answer the challenge of the formidable *Manifesto*.

Pope Pius IX, as must every one who occupies the See of Peter, had his finger on the pulse of the times, and in the popular and dynamic von Ketteler he perceived a man who would become a bishop "after God's own Heart." In Berlin, von Ketteler had continued his charitable work, the practice of his social convictions, and after only six years in the priesthood was raised to the bishopric of Mainz. Here he gave over all his energies to the most needed reforms of his diocese, providing for the indigent sick, writing and arguing in favor of the working class, defending the principles of Catholicism, in general carrying on a thorough reorganization of the territory under his jurisdiction.

Twenty years after his appointment to the See of Mainz, von Ketteler was elected to the Reichstag, and there he earned his sobriquet of "the fighting Bishop" through his thoroughgoing disagreement with Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*. In the conflict between Church and State he continued vigorously to uphold the rights of religion, and even though he considered the violent debates unfitting the dignity of a bishop, and eventually resigned because of them,

he remained one of the principal opponents to the Iron Chancellor's anti-Catholic program.¹ In other matters, too, he fought strenuously for his carefully founded opinions. So intense was his defense of his own convictions that he resisted for a while, in 1870, as inopportune, the doctrine of papal infallibility. When death claimed him seven years later he left behind him a record of thoughtful achievement, an example for Catholic leaders all over the world; to the German Center Party he had given a social doctrine and a social platform which were, until the advent of the Hitler's régime, a profound influence for gradual reform in Germany.

* * *

Aside from all the charitable work he performed and the influence he exerted for the economic and social betterment of his fatherland, von Ketteler inaugurated a program which can conveniently be arranged under three heads. The first is his solid teaching on the right and use of private property; the second his interest in, and agitation for, coöperative societies; and the third his complete and effective program for labor.

Von Ketteler adhered closely to the Thomistic interpretation of property rights as the only correct and orderly system in which economic functions could be purposively carried on. Starting with the basic truth that God is the only absolutely sovereign being, that all others have only a conditional existence, he insists that "property, like authority, has its deepest and only secure roots in religion, in the living belief in God. Let these roots be cut and it fares with property and authority as with the tree whose

¹ Windhorst, of course, was Bismarck's most famous opponent.

roots have been cut: externally it looks the same but it has lost its strength; the first blast of wind overthrows it." He continues in some detail, explaining that since God in His providence for the human race necessarily wishes that created things be used for the sustenance of man, He has given man a right to them, a *usufruct*, as the Scholastic philosophers term it. It is this right to the use of property which the Church upholds when she explains and defines private property.

In his work, *The Labor Question and Christianity*, von Ketteler plainly points out that there are two extremes into which men have fallen in their methods of using property, and that the solution, like that of so many other perplexing social problems, is to strike a middle course between the two. The first is the socialist scheme, whereby all men will hold all the goods of the world in common ownership, ideally arranging it so that none shall ever be in want, none shall ever control vast expanses of property to the deprivation of less fortunate men. The other extreme is that into which complete liberalism has led most of the civilized world, teaching that there is no such thing as a common basis of ownership, that every man has the unhampered right to gather and possess as much property as he can. Von Ketteler was radically opposed to both systems, and he returns again to his basic principle: the things of the world were made for the sustenance of all men. Individuals have an inalienable right to a portion of the world's goods and property, and enjoy the liberty to dispose of the usufruct as they see fit. In this way only will there be efficient management and general order among men, but—and this is the essential note of his program—although a man enjoys the fruits of his property he cannot look upon

them as *exclusively* his own. The point is that a man holds his property conditionally to the prime purpose of all property, that is, God's decree for the common sustenance of all men. Therefore, the double aspect of property, social and private, must always be maintained.

It was a commonplace of von Ketteler's time, as it is in the present, to condemn the Church's moral argument for ownership on the ground that the society of Thomas Aquinas, in which it was proposed and in which it functioned so beautifully, is no longer the society of modern times. It was a specious excrescence of the bourgeois mind, even in those days, and Churchmen leaned over backwards in attempting to prove that individual appropriation of property was a moral right, and laymen immediately made the most of it, drove it to extremes, and appropriated to their heart's content. The fact is that the interpretation by most people has been that of morality instead of that of intelligence. The error has been in supposing that man is mostly will and little intellect, and the arguments for the most part degenerated into moral arguments instead of intellectual ones.

It is not that Aquinas, or von Ketteler in his explanation of Aquinas' doctrine, stressed the wrong side of the matter. On the contrary, they insisted that it was because man is an intelligent creature that he may and must make claim to individual ownership. Neither of them stated that the tenant, or the wage slave who operates another man's property for the benefit of that man, cannot do so properly because he is a *morally bad* man, or that he is *essentially* incapable of administering property that does not belong to him. They offered rather, an intelligent argument—to me it seems the only strong argument for private owner-

ship—and that is, that the ownership of property is *necessary* for the individual.

It is humanly impossible for a man to manipulate a shop or a farm or a forge according to his own notions as a responsible workman unless he has a personal stake in it. This does not mean that a man *cannot* do good work unless he owns the tools and materials of his craft. There are many who prefer to shun the responsibility of running their own business, many who are incapable of doing so. These men, in preferring the employ of another, need not work according to *their own notions* of responsibility. The argument applies to those who desire to own and operate their property. The intelligent approach to ownership, then, tells us that for the intelligent carrying-out of the work to be done, and for the intelligent management of a man's personal and family life, individual ownership and control of property is a prime requisite.

If we claim that man's right to property is *primarily* a moral right, the basis of ownership cannot stand consistent scrutiny. As primarily a moral being, the one thing which man cannot claim is ownership of property and goods, for "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," and the socialist argument for common ownership may well be supplemented by the moral idea that the earth is the Lord's munificent gift to man for the common and equal providence of all people. With this thought in mind it is obviously absurd to contend that private property is first of all a moral right, and if there were no other basis for it than morals, the fate of private ownership is sealed.

But when von Ketteler, almost a hundred years ago, spoke of the right of private property, he was in the midst of an economic situation that has become even more com-

plex in our own day. Men had cunningly taken the Thomistic doctrine of ownership and bent it to their own ends, crying always that they had a right to become possessors of goods and property for the simple reason that most people could not administer them properly and profitably for themselves. "Let us alone," the liberals exclaimed, "and everything will work out perfectly." And the philosophers and theologians perplexedly thought that perhaps the teaching of "individual ownership for the common good" was not working out so well as it should. Power, which was once found in the control of tribes and nations, was now found by the economic lords in the individual appropriation and control of other people's property—but not for the common good.

So it was that von Ketteler reiterated the common-sense principles of Aquinas. "When we speak of a natural right of ownership, there can be no question of true and complete proprietorship, but only of a usufructuary right." But this usufructuary right, too, must not be regarded as an unlimited right, as the economic liberals contended. It cannot be regarded as "a right to do with terrestrial goods what man pleases, but always and solely as a right to use these goods as God wills and as He has ordained." And God in His providence has ordained that man has a right *to use* terrestrial things for his sustenance. Men, however, have separated themselves from God, have then logically disregarded the order of things ordained by God, have "regarded themselves as the exclusive masters of their possessions and looked on them only as a means of satisfying their ever-increasing love of pleasure; separated from God, they set up sensual pleasures and the enjoyment of life as the end of their existence, and worldly goods as the

means of attaining this end; and so of necessity a gulf was formed between the rich and the poor such as the Christian world had not known till then." Thus it is essential to remember always that human proprietorship is relative or restrictive, not absolute or outright.

After demonstrating this groundwork of the Catholic doctrine, von Ketteler repeated the three classic and practical reasons advocated by Aquinas for private property. First, a man works more efficiently and more capably when he himself will receive the benefit of his labor; it is the only way to have good work well done so that the work itself becomes at the same time a song of praise to God. And every man takes better care of the fruits of his labor if he possesses them himself than if he has them in joint-ownership. Secondly, there is the very practical thought that without individual ownership there would be world confusion in the management of all inter-human relations. Initiative and personal responsibility would cease. Finally, the only method by which we can have peace and lasting order on this earth is by the recognition of every one's right to own property and goods, concomitant, of course, with his proper use of them. Private property can preserve peace among men.

* * *

The preachment of principles such as these was a very necessary mode of procedure for a man of von Ketteler's temperament, but they hardly sufficed. It is all very well to lay the groundwork for social reform, but the actual superstructure must then be added before results can accrue. He saw that the workingmen of Germany were in

extreme need, could not help themselves, and that there was imperative need for some one in his position and with his influence to formulate a program for them. As he himself said, "Otherwise the unbelieving workingman will say: Of what use are your fine teachings to me? What is the use of your referring me by way of consolation to the next world, if in this world you let me and my wife and my children perish with hunger? You are not seeking my welfare, you are looking for something else." What then was the best method of showing Catholicism's interest in the proletariat?

Von Ketteler's answer to this question in 1864 was the publication of *The Labor Question and Christianity* in which he explained his proposals for coöperative associations. He compared these groups to a human body in that they bear to a certain extent a soul within them. "Even though the direct aim of the association is entirely earthly, dedicated to daily life, nevertheless it receives a higher binding power if it is formed by Christian elements." The great difference to be sought for in an association of this kind was to note whether it was animated by Christianity or by the modern worldly spirit. And it is exactly at this point that Ketteler demands a cleavage from the associations supported by the socialists Schulze-Delitzsch, Lasalle, and Huber, whose binding power, or "soul," was the spirit of selfishness.

The plans he advanced for the association of workingmen were of two kinds, the general type of trade union, and the erection of worker-controlled productive associations. In the actual formation and operation of both he was too busy to have a direct hand. The duties of his episcopal office prevented him from taking an active part, and even

had he been able to do so, he believed firmly that the workers must of themselves form and operate them. "Corporate self-help" is what he called the principle behind these organizations, and by it he meant that people should help themselves by their own efforts. Of course he recognized the fact that they needed intelligent guidance, and always stood at hand to tender help and advice in this respect.

He stated that this corporate self-help must take the place of individual self-help which liberalism had always emphasized. The workers had to band together to improve their condition, while those who were in higher positions in the economic world could well take care of themselves. In the Bishop's point of view, the very opposite had taken place; the workers had been prevented from uniting to help themselves corporately, while the employers had coöperated to further their own ends and at the same time keep the employees in subjection. To rectify the worker-employer relation, he maintained the necessity for an organization to which all the workers must belong. The trade union was the basis upon which he hoped to elaborate a constitution applicable for all members of the working classes. Its purpose would be to assure moral as well as material protection to its members. A district federation or trade council would be formed from these unions, and through them the common funds would be administered, the plans for all the subsidiary unions would be formulated, and the connecting link formed between the workers and the national government.

Ferdinand Lasalle was the man who had made most contemporary social thinkers aware of the possibilities of productive coöperatives. Von Ketteler, too, went part of

the way with him, but the two men approached the matter of coöperation from wholly different premises. Lasalle had assumed the truth of Turgot's so-called "Iron Law of Wages" which asserted that labor was a commodity, to be sold at a price, and that its price, the worker's wages, would be only enough to allow subsistence. Ricardo had expanded this theory into a system, and Lasalle was the chief protagonist of that system. Hegel, Marx, Ricardo, and Blanc were contributors to Lasalle's philosophy of labor, and it is small wonder that with this quartet as a background Lasalle had little chance of producing a Christian system.

It was, however, the second of Lasalle's ideas that caught the interest of von Ketteler and induced him to advocate the "promotion of producers' associations by the special means available only to Christianity. . . . The worker in them is both worker and employer and hence has a double interest in their revenue—his wages as a worker and his share in the actual profits." In the same trend of thought he explained that there were objectionable features in the system as proposed by Lasalle and his followers, and practical difficulties in the matter of finances. But he endorsed them because "Whatever is true, good, and practicable in the idea of producers' associations will be brought to pass by Christianity."

The most knotty problem in the system was the want of money. Where workers become owners it is obviously impossible for them to make as much as the first preliminary step toward association without some resources, and they themselves had nothing. With little or no capital they would be literally crushed out of existence by large corporations with millions at their command. At first von Ketteler

saw only two means of overcoming the difficulty. The first was the State from which a subsidy should be granted for the erection of the pioneer associations. But current leaders in the German state were not oversympathetic to labor, and then there was always the danger that the workers, after building up their business would lose control of it, that it would be appropriated by a rapacious government. The second source of finance was the wealthy upper classes, but of these von Ketteler says, "To be sure, that class which could do a great deal in this matter, the class of rich merchants, manufacturers, and capitalists is, generally speaking, at the moment rather removed from Christianity; it now forms in particular the promoting, paying, employing power of the great Liberal party." Hence, there could be little help expected from a group naturally opposed to the very principles for which producers' co-operatives were being formed.

Finally, however, von Ketteler selected and endorsed one of the features of the Schulze-Delitzsch plan. It was a dishearteningly slow method of gaining and protecting the necessary funds, but it was a most stable one. Credit-unions, the modern form of banking coöperation, was the idea he approved, and in this scheme he noted that the people were able to control their own money, extend loans when necessary, and insure a sound backing in their business enterprises. Another method of getting business concerns into the hands of the workers was one that required a great sacrifice on the part of original owners. It was the plan followed in America by the late Edward Filene. In it the original owner continues to manage the business while he gradually allows the workers to obtain shares through their wages and through an accumulation of the profits

which would ordinarily be his. This scheme has been completed successfully in a few well-publicized cases, but it requires a degree of selflessness that is truly Christian, and cannot be too greatly depended upon in the modern business world.

The Bishop had quite startled the world with his writings on the labor question, and he forestalled objections by admitting that "many will say that I, as a Bishop, have no right to meddle in such matters." And probably the conclusions he drew at the end of a discussion on coöperative enterprise were still more unexpected. "Above all things," he commented, "it is necessary that the idea of coöperative associations and the ways and means of organizing them be examined on every side. For only when their importance for the working-classes shall have been recognized on all hands, not least of all by the people themselves, and their feasibility demonstrated, can we hope that the attempts to establish them will be multiplied." His words have borne fruit.

* * *

The Bishop seemed to be fighting against time. Despite all his efforts to bring the social problem to the attention of the world and to the serious consideration of legislators, the disintegration of society was going on apace. What he called the "pulverization process," the breaking up of society into individual atoms, the new conception of the workman as a mere unit in the industrial scheme; all these were due to liberal economics. The twin evils to which this system gave birth: accumulation of capital on the one hand, and on the other, the steady increase of the number of men whose only means of livelihood is daily labor, were

trends that shake the very foundations of civilization. In his work *Germany After the War of 1866* von Ketteler wrote, "We are therefore justified in maintaining that the difficulties resulting from the condition of the laboring classes are alarmingly on the increase, and that all the theories of modern economics are radically incapable of providing a remedy."

What, then, was the remedy; and what in particular were the demands of von Ketteler by which he hoped to solve the most pressing needs of the day, and slow down to some extent the rapid course of social disintegration? The answer given by him in 1869 is his *Christian Labor Catechism*. He had originated the idea of frequent conferences of the German Bishops, and in that year at Fulda he gave the solution which later appeared in the *Catechism*. It was the German Church's stand on the labor problem, and it was given great importance because of its endorsement by the authoritative voice of the Episcopacy.

The first proposition he advanced seems a matter of course at the present time, but there were then many who had to be convinced of its justice. It was his explanation of the lawfulness and necessity of labor organizations. Some openly doubted the right of association on the part of the workers and thought that even if it were proved lawful it was not at all necessary. Von Ketteler in his usually fiery style put forth a convincing argument in the opening paragraphs of his speech. With the ground thus cleared he proceeded to show how conditions would be alleviated.

The first of his demands concerned the increase of wages up to a level corresponding to the true value of labor. To bring this about there was a need for trade unions which,

he showed, had arisen in England and now spread to Germany. The legitimate weapon of unionized workers is, when all others fail, the use of the strike. Von Ketteler quotes with approval the fact that the English strikers were enabled to gain wage increases of fifty, twenty-five, and fifteen percent through different strikes. Of course, there is a limit beyond which these wages cannot rise, but even then by practicing temperance and economy the workers can enjoy a respectable competency. In warning against too aggressive measures in seeking their rightful wages, he states that "The object of the labor movement must not be war between the workman and the employer, but peace on equitable terms between both."

After demanding a just and equitable wage for the workers, von Ketteler's second point is for shorter hours of labor. The contemporary fact was that the hours of labor, even for children and women, were unendurably long, and he assured the workers that they have an indisputable right to combat by their united effort the abuses visited on them by their employers in this respect. Not only should the workmen demand a change of these conditions, but the legislating body of the government had the duty to arrange that they be changed.

The third claim seems, on the face of it, somewhat antiquated, for it is observed in most Christian countries to-day. The laborer had a legitimate claim to a weekly day of rest, and the Bishop points out that not merely the wealthy entrepreneurs, but also tradesmen, landowners, and masters generally, deprive their work-people of well-earned Sunday rest. "It has always been a favorite trick of the capitalists to throw the veil of tenderest philanthropy over their ruthless abuse of the workmen and to hold up the

urgent demand of the Church for days of rest as prejudicial to the interests of the working-classes. With what minute exactness were not the Sundays and holidays counted up, and with what a sugared mien was not the grand total of possible gain calculated if these days were given to work! From this the inference was drawn that the money-magnates were animated by the purest feelings of charity and that the Church was hard-hearted and cruel and hostile to the prosperity of the people." There was not much possibility of deceiving the "fighting Bishop" with such arguments, for he adopted as his own the socialist proposal that a man "receive as much pay for six days' work as he now receives for seven."

The fourth legitimate demand of the working class was that child-labor should be prohibited in the factories. Here again the laborer and his family are almost helpless because of the inadequate pittance earned by the head of the family. Often they were forced to allow their children to work in the factories so that they could have sufficient income to provide even the essentials of existence. Von Ketteler wished the total prohibition of factory work by children under fourteen years of age, and when the North German Confederation merely restricted child-labor, instead of forbidding it, he said, "I deplore this action of the legislature profoundly, and look on it as a victory of materialism over moral principles." The objections that stood in the way of child-labor legislation in von Ketteler's time still impede its adoption in our own day.

The fifth demand made by von Ketteler in behalf of the working class was that women, especially the mothers of families, be prohibited by law from working in factories. And here especially the Bishop showed the connection be-

tween the general problems of labor and the necessity for keeping intact the main source of Christian society, the family. In this respect, he said, "There is no doubt that the labor question is above all a question of morality and religion. The more intimately you are united with the Church, the better wives you will have for yourselves, the better mothers for your children, the more pleasant will your home life be, the more effectually will the ties of family keep you from the dangers of the tavern, the cheap eating house and the dens of shame." And this protest against the work of women in factories was thus more than a mere economic argument; it struck at the essential basis of society, and carried with it important moral implications.

Likewise, the final demand in this series of social needs of the working class was made for the most part on moral grounds. It was a corollary of the previous one in that it wished to prevent young girls from being employed in factory work; and the material argument first advanced was that girls can work at lower wages than men, and they thus have a damaging effect on the income of men. "But the principle argument," said von Ketteler, "against the employment of girls in factories is the prejudicial influence of factory work on the morals of the working-girls and consequently on the families of the future." If girls are to be permitted in some cases to work in the factories, there are certain safeguards that must be assured by the employer before approval should be given by the working-men's union representatives.

These are the points which von Ketteler made known to the workers themselves. At a time shortly after this he added several others which he deemed necessary for the laborer's welfare. They were: closing of unsanitary work-

shops; workmen's compensation in times of sickness; a law in favor of coöperative associations for workers; the appointment of factory inspectors by the state.

* * *

Bishop von Ketteler was not only the mouthpiece of Christian workers in Germany, he was the man of the hour for the Catholic Church. To him belongs the credit for initiating the trend of social thinking among German Catholics. After his election to the Reichstag in 1870, and before his death seven years later, a Christian Social Party was inaugurated to carry out his policies and defend his principles. The great Catholic Center Party was inspired and influenced by the doctrines of von Ketteler and his group.

During von Ketteler's lifetime German Catholicism was confronted with three growing obstacles, all of which he attempted in some degree to overcome. There was a growing despotism on the part of the state, later evidenced in the *Kulturkampf* of Bismarck. There was socialism, slowly insinuating itself into the hearts of Catholic workmen; and finally, the most difficult obstacle in any country, the personal apathy of Catholics in high professional and industrial positions. In combating all three of these, von Ketteler's influence and personality colored the trend of his co-religionists for many years after his death.

Success did not always attend him. In fact his was rather a work of clearing the ground so that his successors could follow more confidently the way to social betterment. Leaders and social agencies after his time carried out his work. When Bismarck was dismissed in 1890, the next

MARX, MAN, AND MACHINERY

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE UNDER the Bolshevik ideology frequently reminds me of Alice's strange experience in Wonderland. Especially comparable is that time when she sat down, finished off a whole cake, and then exclaimed, "Curiouser and curiouser!" because she found herself "opening out like the largest telescope that ever was!" Similarly the Soviets sat down, tried to polish off the whole of Marx's doctrines; and now while they are in the process of digestion the rest of the world exclaims, "Curiouser and curiouser! The most unexpected things are happening!"

It must not be thought, however, that all the curious occurrences in Russia proceed as smoothly and unobtrusively as a digestive process, or that they were entirely unplanned, even down to the present "transitional" period of violence and dictatorship. As Lenin told the First Congress of the Communist International in 1919, "History teaches that not a single oppressed class has ever come to power, or ever could come to power, without living through a period of dictatorship, that is of the conquest of political power, and of the forcible suppression of the most desper-

ate, the most furious resistance which the exploiters have always shown, not hesitating at any crimes." When the period of dictatorship, which is now in its second decade, will have ended, there will be another period, "when society is still not fully free from various survivals of capitalistic society. This lower stage of Communism is called socialism." Thus is the past interpreted, and the future built upon it.

In 1932 Maxim Gorky, realizing that even this lower stage of Communism had not yet been reached, said, "The dictatorship of the proletariat is only a temporary phenomenon, which is indispensable for the reëducation of tens of millions of people who were formerly the slaves of nature and of the bourgeois state and for making them the sole masters of their country and of its vast resources." But that stage will pass away and there will come the full flowering of Communism, the benefits of which were prophetically enumerated by Stalin to the American Workers' Delegation in 1927. According to him, the characteristics of communist society will be: no private ownership; no classes or government; planned economy; industry and agriculture treated equally; full development of science and art; freedom of the individual; from each according to his ability, to each according to his need. Thus, briefly, we have the paradise which is to eventuate from these "curiouser and curiouser" happenings of the Soviets; it is the objective by which they are justifying the means considered necessary by Gorky.

Never for a hesitant moment must we think that all these things are mere chance occurrences for, as Gorky said, "Karl Marx was a very wise man, but it should not be imagined that he came into the world as Minerva

sprang out of the head of Jupiter. No, his theory is another case of genius perfecting a scientific experiment, as were also the theories of Newton and Darwin in their day. Lenin is much plainer than Marx, and not less wise a teacher." It is a delightful surprise to learn that Marx was a wise man, especially after one has been studying, and searching his writings for several years to find some proof of his wisdom. And at last I have found it.

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But there is another grain of wisdom in Marx. It is his insistence on the economic value of labor, a point which I think the most important in the many pages of his writings. I do not mean that he attempted to dignify labor; perhaps he meant to, but assuredly his followers did not achieve that end. More than any one else in the history of the world, Marx belabored the idea of work, and through his emphasis that work alone makes a product valuable, he has made the workers of the world conscious of the value of their labor. He gave it an economic value understandable to the commonest laboring man, and by teaching that the value of a commodity equals the amount of labor used in its production, he gave the laborer an inkling of the really important part he had been playing in industry.

In general we are, I think, too quick to condemn Marx's theory of value, not considering sufficiently that it has had on the whole a remarkably benefic effect. Because we can disprove easily his statement that "all commodities, as values, are realized human labor," we seem to condone the top-heaviness of a capitalistic system tending always to the opposite extreme. As a matter of experience, although we

subconsciously know that human labor is the most important of the value-giving factors in commodities, we act always as though money alone renders commodities commensurable. Most of us consistently judge an article of merchandise by its price tag, provided that the price is within the limits of some vague range which mysteriously appears in our mind when we judge an object's value. That price range depends to a great extent upon our manner of living, our ability to pay well or poorly, our usual habit of purchasing lavishly, or economically. We are then selfishly materialistic when we weigh the *quid pro quo* in the buying and selling of goods and, though we realize dimly that labor is the largest value-factor in almost all products, we allow an abundance of other considerations to smother that realization.

Marx, on the other hand, became almost devoutly spiritual in meditating on the presence of labor-time in the things we buy and use. He believed money has its use, but that its use should be restricted merely to a handy expression of the real value of objects. "Money, as a measure of value," he said, "is the phenomenal form that must of necessity be assumed by that measure of value which is immanent in commodities' labor-time." Condemned rightly as a rank materialist in his philosophical vagaries, Marx is here, in the most prosaic science of economics, a potent dualist. He frequently uses terms such as: "Under the ideal measure of values there lurks the hard cash . . ." and, "If we abstract from the material substance . . ." In Marx's main concept, labor-power is a potency which must be reduced to action. Its first importance is the fact that it is a universal, spiritualized thing, and then it becomes particularized only as a secondary process. It "becomes a reality

only by its exercise; it sets itself in action only by working.” If the powerful mind of Marx had been trained in the metaphysics of the Schoolmen, his contribution to economic thinking would have avoided the pitfalls into which it stumbled, and would to-day be invaluable.

Trying desperately to find some constant factor in production and distribution of commodities, Marx hit upon labor-time as the most plausible. In the second volume of *Das Kapital* he devotes some pages to this problem, illustrating it with practical examples, as he very aptly does all the problems he treats. He points out that “socially necessary labor,” that is, labor of every kind that goes into a commodity, is represented by both the commodity itself and the price asked for it. Thus, if two equal quantities of socially necessary labor are represented respectively by one quarter of wheat and two pounds of money, these two latter are equal to each other. But the difficulty is that while the quarter of wheat remains the same, and the amount of labor remains constant, there is a frequent price fluctuation. Circumstances sometimes allow the price to change to three pounds, and at other times may compel its reduction to one pound. “If the productive power of labor remain constant,” argued Marx, “the same amount of social labor-time must, both before and after the change in price, be expended in the reproduction of a quarter of wheat.” But the theory of labor-value evolved by Marx has not solved the problem, for it is one which will probably never find an adequate solution.

The kernel of truth in Marx’s theory was reached by prescind- ing from all the variable notes in products and arriving ultimately at one note common to them all. Finding this note, labor-time, he made the mistake of all ex-

tremists by overemphasizing it until the other factors of value were completely submerged. These others are mutative, and he was looking for a constant. He noted that rarity makes objects valuable, that fashion influences the fluctuating demand for certain goods, thus lowering or raising their value. But these things he discounted because they are immeasurable, and because he thought they should not exist in a well-ordered society. Above all, the aspect Marx found most distasteful is the fact that there exists in all commodities a certain "surplus-value," that is, the unearned profit accumulating in the hands of the capitalist. Of all notes to be abstracted from the finished product, this was the first to go.

The philosophical investigator then found that in each of the products he mentioned there remained but one common note. "It consists of the same unsubstantial reality in each, a mere congelation of homogeneous human labor, of labor-power expenditure." There were objectors then, as there are now, who argued that if the value of a commodity is measured by the amount of labor spent on it, the product of a slow and slipshod worker would be more valuable than that of an energetic and skilful man, simply because it took longer to make. In answering this obvious objection, Marx again became metaphysical, and by his very answer showed his theory to be impracticable. He said, "The labor that forms the substance of value is homogeneous human labor, expenditure of one uniform labor-power. The total labor-power of society, which is embodied in the sum total of the values of all commodities produced by that society, counts here as one homogeneous mass of human labor-power, composed though it be of innumerable

individual units." How this mass is to be broken down for purposes of scientific measurement still remains a mystery.

Up to a certain point the careful analysis by which Marx's theory is supported is excellent. We cannot insist too strongly that he has done an immense amount of good in making the world conscious of the economic worth of labor. When he says that capitalist society is characterized by the fact that the process of production has the mastery over man instead of being controlled by him, we agreeably go along with him, and cry it down as loudly as he. But we part company when he says that no factor but labor-power counts in the value of goods, in the first place, because it is incorrect and therefore unprovable, and in the next, because even if it were correct, the notion of abstract labor *in toto* is too tenuous ever to be practically applicable. The correct statement of labor's position in production (and distribution) surely is not that labor can be termed the only value-giving factor, but rather that it has never been estimated sufficiently high among the contributing factors, and that the others, many of them parasitic in nature, have been esteemed too highly. This false unbalance has been maintained by the chicanery of finance-capitalism with the result that labor continues to receive only dribblets from the rivers of wealth it creates.

The question of most importance is that of the just price for a commodity. Marx's method of pricing has long ago been disproved, and it is merely bludgeoning the obvious to offer an argument for a principle that has fallen down all along the line. But such reasoning does not by any means demonstrate that the matter of price has been settled; indeed, it has never been settled except occasion-

ally as a temporary expedient. That is above and beyond the one thing we are here discussing, the one root which Marx has driven deep into the soil of modern economic thought. It is not a matter of how much in dollars and cents the workingman should receive from the final cost of his product; it is rather the conviction that labor of every form is the most important contribution to the production of goods. From this, of course, the correct and true conclusion to be drawn is the consideration that labor-time, labor-power, or whatever term is used to designate man's part in production, is also of very great *economic* value.

Not every "goods" we choose to use as an illustration will serve as an apt explanation of this truth. There are certain consumptive goods, such as rainbows, mountain breezes, a friend's letter, all of which are of great value, but which have no value in exchange, and cannot be measured in terms of money. There are other objects such as an amethyst, an Egyptian papyrus, a painting by Velásquez, all very valuable because of scarcity rather than on account of the labor expended in their production. However, in the realm of common goods with which most men are familiar, an investigation of the production process will show the large percentage of labor involved. In a brick building, for example, all the actual putting-together of parts is done by manual labor, and practically all the parts themselves were made by human labor. Another article of merchandise that serves as an example, and at the same time raises a problem, is the ordinary package of cigarettes. The growing of tobacco remains largely a matter of manual cultivation, but from that point onward, the processing of tobacco, making and printing of paper, the rolling, counting, and packing of cigarettes, are taken out of the hands of labor

and done efficiently and economically by *machinery*. And thus a new problem.

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The new problem is more than a century old, but to-day many see in it only the evil which Robert Owen emphasized. Owen made use of it in his own factories, but he thought that machinery was a great disaster, as many moderns think it to be, only because its extensive application must bring about a great displacement of human labor. And in order to offset this evil he proposed a grand and impractical plan of "Spade Cultivation as a Remedy for Unemployment," in which even the use of the plow was to be discouraged. This simple panacea was supposed to make work for men whose places in the workshops were gradually more and more supplanted by machinery.

As the natural forerunner of Marx, Owen was further of the opinion that since human labor, and not machinery, is the creator of new wealth, "the laborer who produces it is justly entitled to his fair proportion; and the best interests of every community require that the producer should have a fair and fixed proportion of all the wealth which he creates. This can be assigned to him on no other principle than by forming arrangements by which the *natural* standard of value shall become the *practical* standard of value. To make labor the standard of value it is necessary to ascertain the amount of it in all articles to be bought and sold." Though Owen never reached the all-engrossing argument in favor of human labor which Marx later proposed, he was nonetheless convinced that a "Substantial improvement in the progress of society may be easily

effected by exchanging all articles with each other at their prime cost, or with reference to the amount of labor in each, which can be equitably ascertained, and by permitting the exchange to be made through a convenient medium to represent this value, and be issued only as substantial wealth increases."

In England, where Owen had preached his social doctrines, and Marx had developed his social theories, much of the discontent in the middle of the century was set at naught when extension of foreign trade and growth of railroads brought a new prosperity. The common opinion was that earlier difficulties were simply the passing pains of the transition from hand labor to machine production. People who had voiced great concern over the competitive threat of the machine against the man forgot their earlier worries in an expanding prosperity that was to be permanent. Every one in England was smugly satisfied; every one except Karl Marx and a handful of other sober thinkers.

Up to that time the only theory held by the socialists in regard to machinery was that it is harmful to the worker. Its main element was a destructive one, but Marx had no illusions about the permanence of its use. He realized, as few men of his time did, that machine labor was one of ever-increasing expansion, and his reaction was to set up a theory of society which would take into prime consideration the conditions of a machine age. He would show how machinery was also a constructive force; and thus the present naïve Russian apotheosis of industrialization received its seminal stirring. Marx prophesied better than he knew; not only was the machine to affect the wage and work problem but was to condition practically every other institution of human society. According to him, it was not only to

destroy traditions and institutions but was to be instrumental in forming new ones to take their place.

The *Communist Manifesto* declared that "owing to the extensive use of machinery and the division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the worker. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the most simple, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack that is required of him. . . . In proportion as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay, more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labor increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work exacted in a given time, or by increased speed of the machinery."

Marx had Friederich Engels as his collaborator when he gave this *Manifesto* to the European proletariat in 1848; and that they both had diagnosed the historical position of machine production much more sensibly than most of their contemporaries, is therein evidenced. The document went on to record that this type of industry had converted the master's small workshop into the capitalist's huge regimented factory. The worker then was not enslaved "by the bourgeois class, and by the bourgeois state," but also enslaved in the chains of the machine and held in subjection by shop foremen and capitalist lords. Finally, "The more openly this despotism proclaims *gain* to be its end and aim, the more petty, the more hateful and the more embittering it is."

But, according to Marx, machinery being in this sense destructive to the immediate interests of the laboring masses, was in another sense constructive in that it concentrated the

masses of labor, bringing them into close proximity in their suffering. "With the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more." The workers perceiving the grievances of fellow workmen, and, having the opportunity of publicizing their own, are enabled to strengthen their morale. In preparation, then, for an effective movement toward a more satisfactory state of affairs, this concentration of men who are performing the same type of work and undergoing the same iniquitous working conditions is of undoubted worth. With properly trained leadership—a function which Marxism, despite its egalitarian principles, has raised to new heights—these increased numbers can be taught to strike promptly and obediently. They can, as Lenin advised them later, "Be on the ground and seize the power."

A new social attitude toward the machine was formed much more quickly among the proletariat than in a higher stratum of society, for the workers bore the first brunt of the machine system. Only after the turn of the century did the machine have a wide influence in almost every phase of society. Not only have production, exchange, and consumption of commodities been revived and accelerated, but the very fashion and tone of living have been radically altered. As Gorky said, Marx was a very wise man; he foresaw something of the changes that would take place in the growth of industrialism, and promptly included machinery as a constructive force in the working-out of Communism.

The *Manifesto* had called attention to the fact that "the various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of

the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labor, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The unceasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes." Thus the very means which are being used to destroy the individual freedom of action of the lower classes become a constructive force binding workers more closely together in a common cause.

The laboring class increases steadily with the steady increase of machine production. Whereas in the past, all revolutionary movements have been more or less the *coup d'état* of a relatively unestimated minority, the growth of the proletarian class will make the impending revolution one of the majority against the minority. This is still the theory adhered to in Russia twenty years after the Soviet upheaval; the numerically scant group constituting the ruling Communist Party continues to insist that the present status of Russia is an expression of the will of all the proletarians there. That was predicted in the *Manifesto*: "All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air."

The recognition of the problem of machinery and of the degenerating status of labor can be proved, I think, to have been the historical impetus which carried Marxism to its implantation—though the possibility of its ultimate fruition is growing more and more uncertain. To put the system of Marxism into operation it was necessary to appeal to the proletariat, the lowest stratum of society, and to insist that it carry on a conflict with the bourgeoisie. The further step Marx took was to declare dogmatically—the historical justification he offers is queasy—that class warfare was the moving law of all the past. Thus the idea of industrialization became inextricably bound up with that of the proletarian revolution.

* * *

According to the dream of Marx, Communism in full flower was to appear in society only after industrialization and mechanization had made the largest portion of the laboring class an army of unemployed. The condition of society would then be at its sharpest line of cleavage; the proletariat would be numerically at its peak, and because of its replacement by machinery would be in the satisfactorily hostile attitude required for its successful expropriation of a small class of capitalists. The workers, having reached the saturation point of human misery and suffering, would then openly revolt and systematically take possession of land, capital, and the means of production and exchange. The bourgeois expropriators would be liquidated and society reorganized for the benefit of all instead of for a few privileged individuals. But thus far, at least, in no country has this process of industrialization eventuated according to the Marxian prophecy.

The expected Marxian result of machine production has not anywhere been realized, especially in agrarian Russia. As a matter of recent history, the rationalization of Marxism in Russia has proceeded along diametrically opposite lines; for, according to sympathetic André Gide, even the benighted Russian proletariat has not yet achieved its dictatorship. What currently passes for it would perhaps better be termed a dictatorship *over* the proletariat than a dictatorship *by* the proletariat. As Gide writes, "We were promised a *proletarian dictatorship*. We are far from the mark. A dictatorship, yes, obviously; but the dictatorship of a man, not of the united workers, not of the Soviets. It is important not to deceive oneself, and it must be frankly acknowledged—this is not what was desired. One step more, and we should even say—this is exactly what was *not* desired." [his italics] ¹

It was the evil of industrialization that was to bring forth the lusty proletarian offspring, but the inverted order of things in modern Russia has arranged it that the proletariat should be in labor to bring forth the process of industrialization. Stakhanovism, which is nothing more or less than the industrial speed-up, has been attended with all the distress and misery against which Marx complained ninety years ago. Stalin, with his five year plans, has been superbly inconsistent with the dicta of both Marxism and Leninism. A divergence on his part from these arbitrary laws would have been intelligible even to the least thoughtful of economic commentators, but a complete reversal in thought as well as practice is what makes us exclaim, "curiouser and curiouser!"

Gide bemoans the fact that "If not Stalin, then it is

¹ André Gide, *Return From the U.S.S.R.*, New York (1937), Knopf, p. 49.

man, humanity itself, that has disappointed us. What had been attempted, what had been desired, what was thought to be on the point of achievement, after so many struggles, so much blood spilt, so many tears, was that then above human strength? Must one wait still longer, relinquish one's hopes, or project them into the future? That is what one asks oneself in the Soviet Union with painful anxiety." ² Thus it is that even the most friendly critic of the Soviet experiment expresses grave doubt not only over the present method of procedure but also over the ultimate achievement of the Communist goal.

At this stage on the road to collectivism the social movement in Russia has shown that Marxism—or what now passes for Marxism—can definitely turn its back on the worker. Starting out with the ideal that "The laborer is worthy of his hire," the Marxian idea was a worthy one, and by itself has done immeasurable good, but following the ramifications of Marxism's historical growth the theory has sorely belied its golden promise. Marx's followers have divided and subdivided in their attempts to follow a practical plan, but the divisions have in the main followed two general lines, the first that of the Russian Soviets, and the other that of the truer Marxists, the Trotskyists. Neither has shown great capabilities in dealing with the problem of labor, either human or machine.

The Russian Social Revolutionary Party was the most powerful of the revolutionary groups before the 1917 upheaval, and believed that the complete Marxian program should be put into immediate operation. The entire classical ideology of this group was opposed to the present phantasmagoric worship of industrialization. It had not

² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

time for even a temporary subordination to expediency in the form of a "gradual fading away" of the state, and maintained the opinion that the proper course of action for Russia was to begin immediately the full socialist program. They were unwilling to wait for a powerful proletariat to grow out of the process of industrialization. There was, however, no opportunity for these idealists to practice their theories.

These revolutionary theorists, fired with grand Utopian ideals, came into sharp collision with practical and politic men like Lenin, and the result was that theory and idealism were thrown overboard to make room for a realistic struggle toward solution. Political, social, and economic conditions were in a turmoil, and the first problem was how to put the country on a running basis and not how "to give to each Russian according to his need, and take from each according to his ability." Thus it came about that the worker, for whom Communism was ostensibly launched, was shunted into the background. Nationalism took the place of Communism, and the men riding in the Russian saddle bent all their efforts toward preventing the country from becoming a vassal of one or other of the victorious countries of the World Conflict.

The all-embracing practical remedy for backward Russia was thought to be the intensification of industrial production. Factories and plants, railroads, canals, and highways became the fetish of the Russian rulers; the agrarian peasant would become a tender of mechanized farm implements; the urban craftsman would become an industrial robot. The trend was away from a beneficial program for the worker, and toward a machine system that could not but enslave him.

The mistake was an excusable one for the vast majority of the Russian population. The unknown has ever had a strange fascination simply because its effects are unknown; and machinery fascinated the Russians. They wanted mechanization because they did not know what machinery could do to a man, nor what terrible effects it could have on society. As Penty remarks, "They did not know what a tyrant it could become, how it could make the world a much more unpleasant place to live in than before, and how the increase of the powers of the human mind over natural laws, which promised the millennium, could be much more easily used to enslave and to destroy the traditions of civilization."³ The mass of Russian peasants and workers was unaware of the full import of industrialization, and for their enthusiasm they could be understood and excused.

However, for the leaders of the Communist revolt, the error of attempting to industrialize Russia was inexcusable, unless, perchance, it was their intention to bring the country as soon as possible to a condition (supposedly ideal for the reception of Communism) of economic enslavement of the masses by means of a capitalist method, a condition so unbearable that the workers would rise and demand the institution of Communism. That, of course, from the historical point of view, is an absurd contention, but it seems more reasonable than the curious manner in which the current leaders in Russia have been pursuing their program.

The tie-up of Communism with the machine in the economic field has driven into the remote future the possi-

³ A. J. Penty, *Tradition And Modernism In Politics*, London (1937), Sheed and Ward, pp. 32-3.

bility of achieving Communism in the socio-political field. In other words, the worship of machinery has made a ghastly failure of the Soviet dream. Machinery by itself could have wrecked Russia as it has tottered civilization in most other parts of the world; unadulterated Marxism by itself could have brought the nation to its knees; but the unchecked combination of the two has brought about a frenzied state of affairs that puts Tsar Peter in the light of a country "schoolmarm."

The paradoxical conclusion that we must draw from a present world-view of Marx's adherents is quite interesting. That Marx's prophecy anent a new and better civilization has not come true; that industrialism achieved through the five-year plans has been an evil rather than a boon to Russian workers; that politically the Communist dream has vanished; that economically the early Marxian faith in machinery has been in vain; that spiritually Bolshevism has brought man a measure nearer the brute; all of these facts are admitted to be true and correct by objective observers of the Soviet experiment. Even the Webbs have not convincingly glossed over the obvious defects. But the startling aspect of Marxism is that the Idea has not died in the face of these facts.

Despite the breakdown of Marxian Communism at all points, there is still observable a wide-spread interest on the part of workers in the promises of the doctrine. This seeming contradiction can, I think, be explained in the psychological phenomenon of people believing only what they want to believe. The laboring mass, especially in partly industrialized countries, manifests a growing faith in the promises of Communism because their present working conditions are unbearable. The laborers want to have faith

MANNING'S CARDINAL PRINCIPLE

Henry Edward Manning (1808-1892)

IT HAS OFTEN BEEN REMARKED OF THE CITIZENS OF democratic countries that they are more interested in their rights than in their responsibilities; and if any one ever had responsibilities, certainly that man has them who lives in a country where "the people rule." That is the essence of democracy. The people ultimately are supposed to constitute the ruling power, the execution of which, of course, they delegate to their elected representatives. But this handing-over of power to other men does not release the citizen from his responsibilities. In other words, while enjoying the rights and privileges of democracy, it is also a duty of the citizen to assume responsibility for the protection of relative freedom in a democratic government.

While affairs are running smoothly, while "prosperity" is the lodestone of the majority of people, there is little thought given to the individual burden of duty resting on the shoulders of the people. And the almost universal reason for this is in the nature of man. Privileges are pleasant; duties are boring. A foreigner is agreeably surprised that in America any one may climb onto a soap-box

and berate any institution and any person he wishes, from the local dog-catcher to the national president. The fact that you can travel from one state to another without a passport, that you can send your son to a school of your own choice, that you are not rolled in the mud if you prefer Catholicism to Episcopalianism or Holy Rollerism, that you can do a dozen other things without let or hindrance from the police and militia; all these things are pleasant privileges of democracy. After a while, of course, they become a matter of rote and are taken as a lasting and necessary condition of democratic life.

But duty is a question of another tone. Civic duty is dull. Social duty, that is, the responsibility each person has toward his fellows, is a bore. Perhaps the reason for this attitude lies in the character of those people who are continually pointing out our duties to us. They are such "good" men and women, these social reformers, of a goodness that alienates them and their "cause" from us. We would much prefer to associate with a personable scoundrel who helps us enjoy our rights, rather than with an upright citizen who keeps telling us to do our duty. Similarly, we find the good arguments of thoughtful men unattractive, and we would much sooner listen to the wild and illogical orations of a demagogue.

It is all so complex on the surface, but really quite elementary when the core is reached. A sudden economic depression seems the most effective method of reaching the core of the question, for it is then that life is reduced to a very simple and elemental affair: to provide food for the stomach, clothes and shelter for the body. When Christ said that a man's life doth not consist in the abundance of things, He presupposed at least the *primum est vivere*

of the Scholastics. The expression attributed to Napoleon takes the same trend: "An army marches on its stomach." Unless a man has a satisfactory amount of the necessities of life it is almost certain that he will not be a good citizen, and highly probable that he will not be a good moral person. But Christ has said also, "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly," but by that he did not mean to imply that the more abundant life consisted in an abundance of *things*.

It is interesting to note that the motive which has awakened citizens of democracies—and, for that matter, suffering citizens everywhere—to a vague sense of responsibility has been the goad of personal deprivation. It is not a noble motive, having in it little of the virtue of justice, and less of the virtue of charity, but it can be nonetheless very effective. If assuming responsibility for the condition of their country, and performing the odious duty of citizenship, will eventuate in "prosperity" in their personal lives, most men are willing to accept the burden. It is the compelling force of necessity rather than the universal law of charity which brings about outward social improvement.

* * *

It was a combination of both of these factors that changed Henry Manning from a merely theoretical lover of democracy into a zealous advocate of social reform. Dire personal necessity in the lives of the working class and a Christlike charity in the heart of Manning brought him to the world's attention when he was well past the physical prime of manhood. Thousands of English workers were actually starving to death, and in the face of this condi-

tion there was incredible luxury in the homes of their fellowmen. It was during the unemployment crisis of 1888 that Manning pointed out the *primum est vivere*, the fundamental principle that every man has the natural right to life; that this right is so important it takes precedence even over the sacred right to the ownership of property. "A starving man," he declared, "has the natural right to his neighbor's bread. . . . The law of natural charity recognizes in each the same right to live and imposes upon us all according to our power the obligation to sustain the life of others as we sustain our own."

This utterance, coming from almost any one else, would hardly have caused a ripple of interest, or at most, would have been considered the mere mouthing of an English radical. But, spoken as it was, by Henry Edward Manning, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the mouthpiece of English Catholics, and at a time of extreme national distress, it caused a great commotion. It was the circumstances surrounding the remark, and the fact that Manning was bold enough to make it when he did, that stamp him as preëminent in the ranks of contemporary social thinkers. I believe that it was his most important social statement.

To a Catholic theologian or a Catholic sociologist there is nothing startling in saying that a starving man is not stealing when he helps himself to a loaf of bread from the nearest baker. The right to life is recognized as primary. One cannot talk of moral arguments when there is no man to listen. All moral arguments rise from the nature of man, from *human nature*, and to have a human nature a man must be alive. Dead men are not humans; they may be anything else, but they do not come under the category of human beings. Thus the first thing necessary is life.

When that is assured we can go on to arguments upholding the morality of an action, of denouncing its immorality.

If a man has a natural right to food, he most certainly has a right to find means of gaining that food, and the most common method of most men is to work for it. There was a time when the generality of men worked directly at the process of procuring for themselves the food, clothes, and shelter they needed. They tilled the soil, tended the cattle, and through this work obtained food. In weaving and sewing they worked for their clothing, and by hewing trees and shaping stones they erected shelters for themselves and their families. But all that has changed. Now all these necessities come to men by a very circuitous route; and when too much of the food, clothes, and shelter produced by the workers is taken out by those who do not produce before the workers receive the equivalent of their labor, there is a want of these necessities. And while the worker in modern industrialized society has as great a right to these things as the primitive worker who produced them all for himself, the whole process has become so complicated that he often finds himself not only without the necessities of life but even without the means of gaining them. We call that state of things "unemployment." The corollary of unemployment is the "impoverishment of the masses."

When Manning explained these simple and fundamental truisms to Englishmen of the Victorian Era he was amazed to learn that men disagreed violently with his remarks. Civilization had drifted far from such primitive principles; had become so complex that men no longer thought back to the divine plan for the providence of creatures. As God told Noah: "Everything that moveth

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and liveth shall be meat for you: even as the green herbs have I delivered them all to you." It was as simple as that. But a fish does not fly fully cooked into your mouth; and corn and fruit need attention. Thus man has a right to his daily bread, and he has an equal right to work for that bread. And most men are willing to work for their necessities of life when there is work to be had.

But there was no work to be had in England in 1888. The inevitable had happened, just as it happened again all over the world about a decade ago. The profit machine which had been introduced and operated by liberalism for over a century had run down again, and Englishmen thought it a fated nadir of the "business cycle" about which no one could do very much. Previously the machine had been primed with various kinds of remedies, from railroad building to empire building. Now the remedy offered for English unemployment was another typically liberal medicine. Someone, thought to be Robert Griffen, a prominent statistician and economist, proposed that the situation could be relieved by increasing as much as possible the profits of the Haves, so that these profits could be used to employ the Have-Nots.

Manning pounced on the idea, denounced it as "heartless and headless," that is, it was not motivated by charity, nor had it an intellectual basis for its support. It did not strike at the root of the problem, and it was impractical. Providing work and food for the unemployed, argued Manning, was not a mere piece of charity-work, which you could do or leave undone as the spirit moved you. It was a right due in strict justice to the unemployed poor, one of the responsibilities that devolved upon a human being, and especially one of the duties that marched side by side with

the privileges enjoyed by all citizens. "The law of natural charity recognizes in each the same right to live," and it imposes upon us all the duty to help each other.

Wilfred Ward, who knew the Cardinal intimately, said that "Manning would get hold of some particular phrase or maxim which was supposed by him to be the one key to the solution of the most difficult problem." As the maxim which he considered the solution for the current problem of unemployment, and especially for the problem of wrong thinking on the part of English economists, Manning kept repeating, "every man has a right to work or to bread." And the more he insisted that he was serious about this statement the more would people denounce him as a socialist and a radical. It was to him a matter of wonder that the principle was not widely accepted, and it was to his opponents a matter of amazement that a conservative Churchman in good standing would keep repeating so dangerous a social postulate.

He took the charge of radicalism in good grace, and even stated later, "I am a Mosaic Radical. My watchword is, For God and the people." In 1885 Dilke had commented, "The Cardinal is our greatest revolutionist," and the reply of Manning was, "I am Radical enough to deny the right of property to the extortionate renting of house jobbers." But that is another item, and has to do with his handling of the housing situation in London.

Thus the statement that man has a natural right to work and to food came as a distinct shock to people who had been raised in a world in which the right to possession and the right to further acquisition were the moving principles of economics. To the charges that he was spreading a dangerous social idea, Manning characteristically

replied in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review* that he was unconsciously audacious in reminding men of the primeval laws that protect the human race. "I thought I was uttering truisms," he wrote, "which all educated men knew and believed. But I found that these primary truths of human life were forgotten, and that on this forgetfulness a theory and a treatment of our poor had formed a system of thought and action which hardens the hearts of the rich and grinds the faces of the poor. I am glad, therefore, that I said and wrote what is before the public, even though for a time some men have called me a socialist and a revolutionist, and have fastened upon a subordinate consequence, and neglected the substance of my contention in behalf of the natural rights of the poor."

* * *

Manning was no mere theoretician laying down fundamental principles and outlining plans for others to follow. It is true that before 1865, when he was raised to the Episcopacy by Pope Pius IX, he seems not to have devoted much time to the labor problem, even in theory. Soon after that, however, he began a stream of letters, articles, and pronouncements on the question, and in 1874, at the Leeds Mechanics' Institute, he spoke his lengthy views in *The Dignity and Rights of Labor*. This speech was later put into publication and, together with his message to the Congress of Liège in 1889, had an important influence upon Pope Leo's Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891. In that speech he insisted that labor is the truest kind of capital; labor comes first for it is living capital, and money is only secondary, for it is merely dead capital. And

from that thought rose another maxim which he liked to emphasize and repeat, "The living capital must eat; the dead capital can sleep."

The opportunity for a practical application of his teaching on the rights of labor came to Manning in the form of the famous London Dockers' Strike of 1889. Leslie in his biography of the Cardinal says that he "attained his zenith of social fame by resolving the same strike, the most important in the history of Labour." The two men, Ben Tillett and Tom Mann, instigators responsible for the Dockers' refusal to work, were friends of Manning, and received from him great encouragement in the formation of trade unions. The strike on the Docks started in August, and from the start the Cardinal was interested rather as a sympathetic pastor of the poor than as a champion of workers' rights. Two hundred thousand people were affected by the original strike, for many workers in kindred trades made of it a coördinated attempt to tie up practically the whole commercial mechanism of London. Business was paralyzed, but, as usual, the laborers were the first to feel the pinch of suffering, for they had no income and no savings to tide them over the crucial period of waiting.

"Three weeks passed," writes Thureau-Dangin, "without any prospect of a solution of the problem; men were growing exasperated, and most violent measures were feared; the shadow of a sort of civil war hung over the City." To prevent riot the city police were brought to the wharves, and then the militia was mobilized. And the cause of all this turmoil was not only the mishandling of laborers who were being crushed under the burden of work, but also a misunderstanding of the true state of affairs on both sides. The workers were led to believe that

their employers were making tremendous profits on the transfer of commodities, and the employers had the mistaken notion that they could relieve the wide unemployment by the "stagger system," that is, by hiring more men, and thus giving each man fewer hours of work. Whatever the true cause of the strike, the public was decidedly in favor of the stevedores, and the situation was a crucial one.

Manning's part in the conciliation of strikers and employers may be read in any history of the period. It was epoch-making. The man was eighty-two years old, but he spent hours every day in going from one side to the other trying to arrange a truce and then a permanent peace. On September 12 he went to the Directors as plenipotentiary of the strikers, and two days later the so-called "Cardinal's Peace" was signed. The Directors had planned to hire "scabs" so that the deadlock could be broken and the Port of London set into motion. "If they had succeeded," said Manning, "we should have had bloodshed. Fifty thousand strangers at work and fifty thousand old hands out in the cold would have ended in an interminable conflict." Thirty-three days after the strike started he brought it to a close, gaining for the men the increase they demanded, a wage of six pence per hour instead of the five they had been receiving.

The immediate victory of the strike did not give Manning the assurance that the thing would or could not be again repeated. An increase in wages means nothing in a society where the cost of living is liable at any time to show an equal increase, and it means very little if there is no assurance of steady work for the men. Then there was the maddening fact that sufficient work could never be

found in the ordinary channels of English enterprise to give employment to all laborers. At almost any time there were two men at hand for every position. The whole scheme of work had broken down in the modern efficient method of production and distribution. The root of the entire work-problem in modern industry had not been reached simply by the settlement of the Dock Strike.

As an earnest toward a more permanent solution, Manning proposed in the *New Review*: "What we may hope will come from this strike is a registration of labourers and an organization of labour. This will clear the dock gates and the East of London of thousands who year by year flow in from the country without knowledge or skill. They become a floating population of disappointed men—indolent because unemployed, living from hand to mouth, and dangerous because they have nothing to lose: starving in the midst of wealth and prosperity from which they are excluded." The Cardinal never liked the term "proletariat" but here exactly he was dealing with the modern proletariat, propertyless, unmoneyed men, who had nothing to sell but the brawn of their backs and arms, who had no roots anywhere, and were thus a danger to themselves and society. Organizing them would give them responsibility; it might even lead to their regeneration as a class. And herein were contained the germs of two other schemes in which he busied himself: housing for the poor, and a betterment of the agrarian situation.

After his successful intervention in the Dockers' Strike, he was looked upon as more or less of an expert in labor controversies. Other strikers came for his assistance, and at the end of the year (December 27) he wrote to Lord Buxton, "I have been turning over the strike matters, and

the more I think the more I am on the side of Labour. Labour and skill are Capital as much as gold and silver. Labour and skill can produce without gold and silver. Gold and silver are dependent on Labour and skill, and Labour and skill are independent *in limine*. The union of the two Capitals demands participation in the products. Wages are a minimized money representation of shares in product—that is, in profits. Silvertown gives fifteen per cent to its shareholders and denies halfpence and farthings to its workers. This is more or less the state of the Labour market at large.” In March of the following year he wrote to Archbishop Walsh, “We have been under the despotism of Capital. The union of labourers is their only shelter, and the Capitalists have now wisely formed a union of their own. This is altogether legitimate, and it has rendered the intervention of a third party necessary to peace and fair play on both sides.”

Here again Manning proved an example by showing that responsibilities toward society go hand in hand with the privileges which come from living in society; and he kept his old maxim in mind, “Every man has a natural right to work and bread.” But besides his interest in work and food for the workers, he likewise gave much attention to the question of their shelter.

* * *

Purcell says that “it is not easy to keep pace with the variety of Manning’s activities.” His interest in the housing of the poor is important because it is another premise in what I consider the most significant thesis of his social philosophy: man’s natural right to live and work. But

there is not one question of political, economic, or social importance to the Victorian Era in which he did not take an active part. And his approach to every problem was the true one. He turned the sharp light of religious principles on them all, and for that reason, though his solutions were not always expedient, they were always based on ultimately sound reasons. Education and child welfare, Agrarianism in both England and Ireland, Home Rule for Ireland, the Poor Laws, temperance, slavery, cruelty to animals, the Salvation Army, George's single tax, the McGlynn Case, labor unions, and housing are some of the matters in which he played an active hand. There were also problems of purely ecclesiastical nature, devolving upon him in his office of Cardinal; and it is no cause of wonder that Purcell found it hard to keep pace with his activities.

Manning was on intimate terms with such diverse characters as Gladstone, Shaftesbury, and Disraeli. He disagreed with them on many points, just as he took exception to the Decree of Leo XIII regarding the Irish Question, but that did not prevent him from working with them. Manning was named a member of the Royal Commission for investigating the housing conditions of the poor. A voluminous report was published in the following year, and given much publicity, largely through the evidence of the Earl of Shaftesbury. On the commission with the Cardinal were Lords Salisbury and Goschen, Bishop Walsham Howe, and other important personages, men of vastly different backgrounds and affiliations, but of the same intense interest in the relief of the poor.

This interest in the deserving poor did not originate for Manning when he became a high Churchman, though it

was only then that he was able to do work of wide-spread effectiveness. In 1841, while still an Anglican and the Archdeacon of Chichester, he attempted to have the Poor Laws of his parish revised. He submitted a memorandum on certain defects in the working of the Laws and suggestions by which they could be remedied; and in return received an encouraging letter from Gladstone,¹ who was then Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and a personal friend of Manning. About this same time the question of immorality in industrial centers engaged his attention and moved him to urge the regulation of hours of labor for girls employed in the factories. His suggestions were kindly listened to, but very little active improvement resulted from them.

In the 1880's Manning was in a better position to insist on the execution of his proposals, and the conditions of the times had become so distressing that even the most apathetic English politician saw the need of reform. In dealing with the Irish Question Manning had seen the necessity for a revision of the land-tenure in that country, and for legislation that would insure adequate housing for the members of the lower class. As the distress in their own country grew even greater, thousands of Irishmen drifted into London looking for a means of livelihood and, incidentally, adding an even greater burden to the overcrowded slum districts. Most of these Irish immigrants were Catholics, and for that reason the Cardinal had the double duty of looking after their moral as well as their physical well-being.

Here also, as in the Dock Strike, it seemed that effective

¹ Manning was godfather for Gladstone's eldest son William, and an intimate of the Gladstone family.

action could not be taken until the disgraceful living conditions of slum-dwellers became generally known and aroused a wave of public sympathy. It was no new thing to Manning, for he had been charitably giving of his financial resources during many years in answering the requests of the most needy; and he had been training the clergy to work among the poor. The Vincent de Paul Society was always in close communication with him, and was a method of relief much to his liking. But now officialdom had been spurred into action by popular demand when the wretchedness of the working class became a public sore spot. A Royal Commission on Housing was appointed in 1884. Thureau-Dangin writes, "Being asked to take part in it with many influential personages, among whom was the Prince of Wales, the Cardinal made himself remarkable by his capability and assiduity." He had already formed his own opinions by personal contact with the abominable fashion in which most of the working class was housed, and he also had some definite opinions as to the methods of alleviating this condition, but the duty of the Committee members was to examine witnesses, and Manning performed his duty very carefully.

The findings of the Commission were published in two large volumes in 1885, but the facts which they presented were only too obvious to any one who had eyes to see. It was the recommendation for improvement which is of greater import. The Report, as McEntee says, "recommended the reduction of rents, the encouragement of building societies or free construction societies, the erection of healthful homes and of houses for the very poor, with supervision of hygiene and propriety and a check on taverns and other dangerous establishments." It is doubt-

ful that these recommendations were fully in accord with the Cardinal's views on reform; they did not go far enough; they were good measures and necessary for immediate relief but they did not hit at the heart of the trouble. Slum-clearance and housing projects have only more recently come into the popular terminology of social thinkers, and if rightly handled, can be beneficent moves in the right direction, but of themselves they are insufficient.

It took six years before the recommendations of the Housing Commission were even partially complied with, but a wholesale change in conditions, and a wholesale attempt to remove the cause of those conditions, has not yet been made in England. It will not be made till Distributionism takes hold of the popular imagination. Manning had some similar idea in mind while he studied the matter of housing for the poor. He recognized, I think, the basic truth about the poorly housed workers when he discussed the matter of property rights. With this was bound up the exodus from agricultural communities and the need for better housing conditions there.

The proposal that rents should be reduced and for "free construction societies," that is, government subsidization of building in the slums, fitted in with Manning's contention that society owes every man a living, that every man has the natural right to the necessities of life. The objective fact, as he realized from his personal association with the working class, was that the cost of living in the city of London was so expensive that only the wealthy could afford it. The income of the workers was inadequate to enable them to rent decent and sanitary quarters for a home, and the Cardinal's answer to this was a demand for

higher wages. But here again he saw that this demand was not sufficient. There were more men than there were jobs. There was a surplus of laborers, and a want of work for them. The army of workers periodically out of employment could not afford to live in the city of London; they were so numerous that it was almost impossible for them to organize for their demands and then expect that every individual would refuse to work except for the union scale of wages. Manning deplored the excess population of unemployable persons thus thrown into a seemingly inescapable dilemma, and it is no wonder that he thought the recommendations of the Housing Commission could not fully resolve it.

* * *

It was this line of reasoning that made the Cardinal toy with the idea of agrarianism, though he admitted he had never formed a definite and satisfactory program. For Manning the housing problem was bound up with the so-called Land Question, and he needed no one to convince him that the centralization of the working population in a place like London was extremely detrimental to a laborer's chance of obtaining shelter for himself and his family. A step further would have brought him to Distributism and the wholesale advocacy for a "restoration of property." However, he came to the problem not as a mere experimentalist; as he once declared, "For seventeen years I sat day by day in the homes of the labouring men of Sussex, and I knew them all and their children by name as well as I knew the scantiness of their means of subsistence."

Henry George's *Social Problems* was a book that found

an interested reader in Cardinal Manning; and his interest in its thesis and its author was in no way abated when, in 1885, Maynell brought George to Manning so that they could discuss the Single Tax system and the proposals advanced in George's more famous work, *Progress and Poverty*. Of course, the Cardinal could not, and did not, go all the way with George when the latter proposed: "we must therefore substitute for the individual ownership of land a common ownership." And possibly Manning did not fully understand that this was the remedy proposed by George, for he admitted that he had not read *Progress and Poverty*. And so it was through this pleasant conversation that the Cardinal was drawn into the American controversy on Georgism, in which McGlynn and Bishop Corrigan were at odds.

Father McGlynn had quoted Manning in some of his speeches for Single Tax Reform, saying, "Cardinal Manning informed Mr. George that he saw nothing in his view to condemn. Surely it will be admitted that he is an authority on doctrine and discipline." The Cardinal deeply regretted the break between Corrigan and McGlynn, and the latter's wild speeches, but he was determined to keep out of the American squabble, while at the same time maintaining that the George proposals had much good in them for the workers of England. "The strongest desire of the workingman is to possess a house and garden of his own." When George made his series of speeches in England it was in the city that he stirred up most interest, for there the disenfranchised workman had at least a glimmer of hope in the nationalization of land. They desired a home of their own, and if the Single Tax scheme would bring it, they were in favor of George.

Father McGlynn had been suspended by his Archbishop, excommunicated by Rome in 1887, and in his stubbornness had refused to visit the Eternal City at Cardinal Simeoni's orders; Corrigan was an unhappy man over the whole affair; and Manning was too interested in George's experiment to desert it, and at the same time too wise to involve himself by an expression of open partizanship against the American Archbishop. If ever Manning was rabid about anything it was the cause of the working classes. He was accused of fanning "the flame of agrarian agitation" at one time, and at another of "introducing Socialism." He replied always to these criticisms in another cliché he had adopted: "I do not know if it is Socialism to you, but to me it is pure Christianity." He even prided himself on being a Christian Radical in that he cut away the surface dissention and strife at every opportunity and got down to the roots of problems. "My Radicalism," he explained, "goes down to the roots of the sufferings of the people."

The influence of Henry George on the social ideas of Manning cannot be lightly passed over. He did not subscribe wholly to them, but through them a whole new vision of possibilities was opened to him. It is easy to see what the Cardinal wanted in the proposal for land reform: a return to a less complex mode of living in which every man could again enjoy the unhampered right to fashion his own immediate surroundings, and through thrift and industry provide the necessities of life for himself and family. The duty and responsibility involved in agitating for this prospective state of affairs were not uncongenial to Manning; as for others, he felt that the government had the right and the duty, in so far as it had the power,

to oblige every one, by enacting legislation, to fulfil his social duties. In the same year that Henry George had his memorable conversation with the Cardinal, the views of Manning appeared in the pages of the *Dublin Review*. Since the agrarian worker could not by himself arrange a better fashion of living, Manning proposed that the land laws of England be changed.

In that same article he sounded a warning to the people of England. He estimated that only five per cent of the nation's population owned all the land; and this estimate included all small landowners as well as the owners of large estates, factories, and farms. He pointed out that the more property a man owned, the higher he could rise in the social scale; and conversely, the less he owned, the lower he sank into the morass of social misery. An increasingly propertyless class, the "lack lands," has in every country, he warned, been the hands and feet of social revolution. Unless the English government through its "talking mill," the Parliament, would quickly benefit the country with an amendment of her land laws, there was more than a mere possibility that constant upheavals would finally force that amendment. And the immediate step in the right direction would be a law prohibiting men from taking land at bargain prices, and then reletting it to the poor at four times as much as they paid.

* * *

The most noteworthy personal feature of Manning's social activity is that it was special work performed above and beyond the necessary duties of his high office. The administration of the affairs of his diocese was enough to

keep any ordinary prelate more than occupied. A Catholic bishop is the father of his flock, and he must be ever solicitous for the welfare of his people. Therefore it was, as Kent points out, "as a Bishop sent by the Holy Ghost, the *Pater Pauperum*, to rule the Church of God, that he spent himself in works of charity or social reform, or defended the truth against attack from all forms of error, or from the corruptions of an evil life, and spoke in the same spirit, whether addressing Dockers in the East End, or Agnostics in the Metaphysical Society, or Bishops and theologians in the Vatican councils."

With this in mind it is easy to understand how the Cardinal could have made mistakes in factual knowledge regarding social legislation and social programs. The amazing part of it is that he was able to accomplish so much, and that he was almost always right in practice as well as in principle. The keynote, however, of all his endeavors on behalf of the impoverished worker is the point that I have attempted to make clear in this chapter. In an industrial-commercial civilization gone awry, in a state of society that had lost sight of the interests of all for the promotion of the individual, Cardinal Manning cut back to fundamentals. Perhaps he startled the Victorians, but that did not prevent him from constantly reiterating the *primum est vivere*: a man has a natural right to life, food, and shelter, and the privileged class has the strictest responsibility toward the underprivileged mass.

LEO AND LABOR

Leo XIII (1810-1903)

SINCE CRAFTSMANSHIP HAS GIVEN WAY TO THE *labor improbus* of both industrial and agrarian workers, the whole concept of the value of labor has changed. The skill of the ancient craftsman has become a rarity because an individual creative worker is no longer the necessary concomitant of production that he once was. And since his type of workmanship is no longer needed for the production of what the medieval world called beautiful objects, and we to-day call "works of art," the sphere of the craftsman has entered the ateliers of artists; and these for the most part now pander to the effete tastes of wealthy patrons. This, in the modern concept, we prefer to label artistic creation rather than craftsmanship; and it is now the only kind of work commonly called *honorable*.

The *labor improbus* that provides daily bread for the nation and fulfils the other necessities and luxuries of modern civilization had, at one time, a definite relation to the eternal salvation of man. It was a means of working off the punishment due to sin, of giving honor and glory to God, of acting as co-creator and co-provider in the eternal plan for man's welfare. As such it was dignified;

as such all work was honorable. Not only the intellectual worker, but the manual laborer, too, had a true evaluation of the art he was plying in the divine scheme of things. Of course it is too easily possible to generalize a notion such as this, and pretend that the middle ages were the Golden Age of all labor history. What I mean is that the spirit of the age was typical in its idealization of work; individuals here and there undoubtedly rebelled at the hardships they experienced; individual employers of labor may have thought of their workers in the rôle of profit-making slaves. But that was not the widely accepted, nor widely practised, economic ideology that it has become to-day.

A novel evaluation of work came with the necessary concentration of workers in the new methods of industrialization. Here a man's physical strength was measured according to the *amount* of production he achieved. It was part of the material that went into a commodity to be sold at a profit. Labor had lost to a great extent its social value in becoming merely one of the items in the cost of production; it had lost its metaphysical value in that the conduct of business proceeded more and more on a strictly material basis. The laborer was demeaned in this process so that consequently his work became, even in his own eyes, something commercial instead of something creative.

Another change came when socialist and communist thinkers brought to the workers' attention the economic value of their activities. This thought, of course, had been in the minds of the employing class, but it had not drifted down with any semblance of clarity into the minds of the workers. Now the working class began to feel its worth to the progressive enrichment of the world, and was con-

vinced that since it was the foundation of the profits made out of business it should share in a greater proportion of those profits. In other words, it should receive a larger part of the wealth which could not be created without it. This was rather a different way from that in which the middle ages had extolled labor. Here was a purely commercial way of adjudging the vexations attendant upon the laborious life, and of rightly perceiving that the conveniences and luxuries of modern civilization could not continue except upon the broad back of the laboring masses.

As Goetz Briefs, in his recent excellent book, *The Proletariat*, has so ably expressed this trend: "When therefore the proletarian's sense of worth leads him to magnify the work of his hands, it is not his pride in his calling, not his joy in achievement that is being expressed, nor any fine sense of the value of work for the soul of the worker. Rather the world is being reminded by one very much on the defensive that in an age of bourgeois domination its culture and civilization rest for support on the hands of the proletariat." In this sense communist and socialist theorists have portrayed work merely as an economic and social necessity of existence, and not as something to be interested in for higher reasons. Particularly was it Marx, as I have pointed out elsewhere, who put a downright commercial value on a man's work, and spread this consciousness of value among the laboring classes.

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It was left for Pope Leo XIII to restate officially the Christian principle of work in his encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, of 1891; to put materialistic-minded men again

on the correct path to a true evaluation of the social problems. It is not only that he sent men back to the metaphysical standard upon which all straight thinking must be based; he spoke specifically of the problem of labor and of the *dignity* of work. This, I believe, constitutes his most important assistance to the cause of the laboring class and, in this particular problem, was the most needed declaration he could make. The worker has a dignity all his own; bodily toil is honorable; its acceptance as a mere unit in the economy of production is the grossest error—these are Leonine principles, the rock bottom of a solid labor theory.

Leo pointed out that the employer of labor must ever remember that his workers are doubly dignified in their rôle of *Christian* laborers, and that they are not pieces of property, chattels, to be handled in the same manner as one would manipulate mechanical working instruments. "It is dishonorable," he wrote, "and inhuman to use men as vile instruments of gain and to esteem them only in proportion to the strength of their arms." Thus into a world of economics that had since the time of Adam Smith, Bentham, and Ricardo been wholly engrossed in collecting wealth as the only means of attaining human happiness, Leo injected again the eternal ethical principles of Christianity. He reiterated again and again the age-old truth that power must not function without justice, and that man has a supernatural destiny to the achievement of which labor is one of the prime means.

In this encyclical Leo approached the problem of the workers after a close survey of the conditions of the times and after a direct criticism on the plans and attitudes of socialism. But the point I wish to make here is that his

statements regarding labor and the laborer were the very core of the encyclical for millions of men all over the world. They had begun to doubt what their self-introspection must have told them—that they were more than cogs in an economic machinery of production and distribution. The ethos of the age could not but encourage such humiliating thoughts, and it helped materially in putting men into a receptive mood for the socialist and Marxian panacea.

Leo cut the ground from under all these concepts by going immediately to the root of the problem. The miracle in man which distinguishes him from the brute is the fact that he has in union with his material body a spiritual animating principle. In him, and in him only, is there a combination of corruptible material and immortal spirit. The life to come is the goal of our days of moiling in the sweat of our brows. Otherwise there can be no explanation to the look of dull inquiry in the eyes of fatigued workers who instinctively reach out for something nobler than the mechanized routine of factory and farm. The efforts of the world, the things of earth, he says, "cannot be understood or valued aright without considering the life to come, the life that will know no death." There is something beyond all this distasteful toil; there is an ultimate haven of peace and rest from labor toward which man, spiritualized matter, must reach out his arms. Otherwise the whole scheme of the universe "becomes a dark and unfathomable mystery."

The strength of a man's body, as Leo indicated, must then be ordained to his final end, and anything or any person allowed to interfere with this teleological process is necessarily interfering with the divine plan. Work of every

kind is a creative achievement, one type perhaps more so than another, but it must all fit in with the divine scheme if it is to coöperate harmoniously in the welfare of the human race.

Labor then takes on a metaphysical meaning directly opposed to the concept fashioned both by the socialist ideology and by the masters of modern finance-capitalism. Work for work's sake had the possibility of satisfying a craftsman of the middle ages, and, in some cases, may even be conceived in that manner by a modern workingman. But the sublimation of labor into a category where it stands next to God's constant providence for humanity is a much more important consideration. Work, when it is highly remunerative and performed under proper conditions, may also be a single source of satisfaction for a long period of time in the life of an unimaginative person. He may even for a while disregard the debased position into which the philosophies of socialism and economic liberalism have thrust him. But again and again, in the search for a reasonable explanation, he must return to the thought that in the sweat of his brow man works out his salvation. Work can never be only an end in itself, for it is the universal means to ultimate union with God.

This dynamic finality, so apparent in the universe, is made use of by Leo in his insistence on the ordering of all things properly. Man has a definite relation to his fellow-man just as he has a definite relation to God and to the rest of the material world. And just as man is the ruler of objects of a lower order of creation than himself, so can he never be subordinated inhumanly to objects of the same order of creation with himself. Around this fact turned the whole ancient controversy about slavery—which is not

at all out of line with a discussion of the modern wage-slave. Leo called it shameful and inhuman when men greedily exploit the muscle and physical strength of the laboring man. It is nothing more than a modern replica of subjection, disguised under the much vaunted ægis of the "free contract."

The great Pontiff showed not only that labor is dignified but also that there is an integral connection between the individual and the work that he performs. The work is marked by the personality of the worker for, as he says, "Labor is personal, inasmuch as the exertion of individual strength belongs to the individual who puts it forth and who employs such strength to procure that personal advantage on account of which it was bestowed." Contrary to this, the liberal and Marxian school of economics had made of labor a thing apart, had disjoined the intimate connection which of necessity exists between the two, and had made of the worker a producing machine and of the work a mere measurable commodity, sold in the labor markets of the industrial world. In reality, the freedom which man enjoys as the ruler of creation, and the personality which he injects into his labor, put upon the performance of work a dignity which cannot allow it to be bought and sold, and which ennobles it into a super-material sphere.

This contention regarding the dignity of labor is undoubtedly the most basic and important of Leo's contributions to the solution of the labor problem. I think it will prove its importance more and more as the years pass, and as the break-up of our modern industrialized civilization moves on apace. However, it must not be thought that Leo originated this idea in modern times, or that it had

not always been present, more or less latently, it is true, in the Christian concept. The importance of its utterance by Leo is the fact that he spoke it from Rome, as the head of Christendom, and with papal authority.

The idea had been gaining force all along in the social activities of Catholics in central Europe. It was experiencing a resurgence, so to speak, as the ethos of industrial capitalism made the position of the workingman more and more untenable. In Germany, von Ketteler, whom Pope Leo later called "my precursor," had asserted it in his *Christianity and the Labor Question*. And in the promulgation of his principles he had gradually drawn around him such men as Winterer, Reichensperger, Hitze, and Windthorst. In France the idea may be traced back to Villeneuve-Bargemont, Ozanam, or even farther, but it was popularized mainly through the work of the great Count Albert de Mun, whose program for social betterment called for a return to the guild system of the middle ages in so far as it could be adapted to modern circumstances. With him were associated Cardinal Langénieux, Lamoignon, Grandmaison, and especially the Marquis René de la Tour du Pin Chambly, the ablest economist and profoundest philosopher of the group.

The activities of these men were well known to Leo long before he ascended to the Papacy; and he saw in them the Christian principles upon which the reconstruction of the social order must take place. He learned through their extensive teaching and propaganda that they had an almost ready-made program of action in the matter of labor. Above all, they held to the dignity of the workingman's functions in society. Labor, they insisted, could not be thought of as a mere commodity, the worth of

which is determined by the fluctuations of supply and demand; it was first of all a human and personal action by which man co-creates and co-operates with God, and at the same time earns his eternal salvation. As Leo later pointed out, these men were already teaching widely that the worker is a dignified, intelligent, and responsible human being, and not merely an instrument or tool for the production of goods.

In Switzerland, Austria, and England, outstanding Catholic leaders, both lay and ecclesiastical, were taking over these thoughts on labor. They were emphasizing them in the hope of assuaging the increasingly serious difficulties of industrial society, but there was some discord in the matter of means. Cardinal Manning was doing yeoman work in the English industrial crisis, but his success was the result of a personality, not that of a system. Finally, by his official pronouncement, Pope Leo gave the whole movement a unified set of principles and a method of procedure, which, though still interpreted in a variety of ways, has clarified the issues and given direction to hitherto scattered efforts.

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As Joachim Pecci, Leo XIII had lived a comparatively sheltered existence from the time of his birth in 1810 until his thirty-third year when he was appointed Papal Nuncio to Belgium. There he was plunged into the modern imbroglio of a liberal-democratic movement which was giving to capitalism a definite shape. Technology, trade and finance, market manœuverings, and business relations were beginning to take the appearance which was later to bring European society perilously close to the brink of

ruin. There the future Pope was able to see at first hand the problems of a new social disorder: wide unemployment, poverty, and general distress of the working class, squalid slums, and a feeling of hopelessness in the hearts of the propertyless workers.

The Revolution of 1848 in France, and the general movement of rebellion on the part of the lower classes throughout the whole of Europe, were events which left an indelible impress on the mind of the young cleric. From then until his elevation to the Pontificate the plight of the enslaved industrial population was never far from his thoughts. Millions of Catholics had settled into the ranks of the hungry unemployed, had, through no fault of their own, become the victims of economic and social revolutions. Liberalism was acknowledged a dangerous enemy to the welfare of the Catholic people, but now there rose a new danger, the tenets of scientific socialism. And all the while these upheavals and threatened outbreaks filled the news of the second part of the century, Pecci was formulating the plans later to be promulgated from the Vatican.

Almost the first action of the newly elected Pope was the publication of the encyclical, *Inscrutabili*, treating of these evils of human society, and of their causes and remedies. Contained therein were the recognition of the dignity and rights of the workingman, and an admonition to the clergy that they should help in establishing and encouraging labor associations for their pursuit. And he speaks not only of craftsmen but also of common laborers: *opportunitum videtur artificum atque opificum societates fovere*.

Again in a letter to the Italian Bishops in 1882 he specifically advocates the foundations of workers' associations so that "the needs of these miserable people might be light-

ened." Evidently, however, his words were not having the immediate effect he desired in this regard, for only two years later he repeated even more strongly his hope of alleviating the distress of workers. In that encyclical, *Humanum Genus*, he insisted that of all people, workingmen are the most worthy of charity and assistance because they are for the most part unable to protect themselves, and are most likely to succumb to the promises held out by various socialistic schemes. Theirs is an honorable calling, and as he said, he wished to assist this *honestam proletariorum classem*.

Finally the exhortations he had addressed to the whole world, but in particular to the clergy, were beginning to bear fruit in the activities of Catholic leaders in France. Organizations operating for the benefit of the working class had long been the ideal of a succession of social-minded Frenchmen, and the Pope notes with particular satisfaction in 1885 the endeavors of Catholic associations of workers. His *Oratio* to them in that year is filled with high praise, and definitely shows that he considers such work not only as laudable but as perhaps the greatest necessity of the moment. He declared himself worried about the disorder engendered by revolutionary doctrines prevalent at the time, and felt that they could be dissipated only by the propagation of the great Christian social truths among the industrial classes.

Only a few months after this Leo again took the opportunity of pointing out his desires in helping the workingman, when a group of visitors came from Germany to Rome. To them also he gave the most frequently repeated advice of his pontificate: Take good care to make the life of the proletarian and the worker an easier one; do all in

your power to lighten their burden, especially since their contribution to the world's welfare is of the utmost importance. Nine days later the Pope gave out an apostolic letter in which he declared Vincent de Paul the heavenly patron of all charitable organizations; and through this letter again demonstrated his admiration and affection for all men who take the part of the worker and the poor.

Leo's zeal for the laboring class did not abate with the passage of the years; if anything, it increased. In 1887 in a letter *ad episcopum Leodiensem* he praised the Belgian Workers' Congress to be held in September of that year, and expressed his gratitude for the accomplishments the associations in that country already had to their credit. And he advised again most emphatically that the laboring class be restored to its proper place in the Christian order of things, that the evils now weighing them down should be removed. He was realistic and blunt enough in his expression when he warned that unless remedies be applied there would be real danger to the security of the state rising from the miserable condition of the people and their great numbers.

In the month of October of that year Leo personally greeted fifteen hundred French workingmen then in the Eternal City to pay their respects to the "Pope of the Workers." He told them of his joy in their progress toward social reform and congratulated them heartily for taking the practical and imperative steps toward that end. At the same time he spoke of the traditional Christian attitude toward labor. The Church, he said, "in teaching the doctrines for which she is the true depository, has always ennobled work, and has raised human dignity and liberty to a new height." With the Church, he asked the

workers to make their labor meritorious before God by taking a supernatural view of it; and in this he again pronounced that work has a metaphysical value and is not a mere material commodity.

This conference with the French workers is significant in that the Holy Father for the first time publicly promised to devote himself to the interests of the working classes. He recalled to them what he had said in the beginning of his pontificate regarding the fundamental principles of the social order. He reminded them that he was watching with much interest the various workers' congresses in France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland, and that he would never cease to strive for the amelioration of the laboring classes' hard lot.

Two years later the encyclical letter, *Quamquam Pluries*, honoring the patron of workers, Saint Joseph, gave Leo an opportunity to return again to the problem nearest his heart. He spoke of Joseph as the protector and exemplar of proletarians, workingmen, and all men in the lower strata of economic society. It was his contention that Joseph, a man of noble ancestry, espoused to the saintliest of women, and fosterfather of God, had not been at all averse to using his hand and mind in lowly manual labor. "*Non est igitur, si verum exquiritur, tenuiorum abiecta conditio: neque solum vacat dedecore, sed valde potest, adiuncta virtute, omnis opificum nobilitari labor.*" The workers should not have confidence in the promises and plans of seditious men whose very concept of their work was a false, materialistic one, but rather in the example and patronage of Saint Joseph who, like Christ, demonstrated practically that labor is inherently dignified.

When the pilgrimage of French workers returned to

Rome in 1889, Pope Leo made what is probably his most significant statement in regard to labor. Work accomplished with the proper spiritual and metaphysical intention is a participation in the divine heritage; it shows that we are the children of the Heavenly Father, that on this earth it is the natural condition of man, and that if it is accepted with courage, it can be an honor and a proof of our wisdom. Thus the wise man keeps always in mind the dualistic nature of worldly existence, and puts in a higher place the spiritual aspect of labor. In this remark is contained also the idea of a *social* value inherent in work, when, as created beings dependent on the Divine Creator, we are in a position to *participate* with Him in His work. This sociologically important idea can never be stressed too often in a modern world suffused with the one-track ideology of materialism.

It was not that Leo was attempting to push back the modern worker into the dim light of the early centuries or the "darkness" of the medieval world. Repeatedly he insisted that the associations, unions, and congresses of workers should adapt themselves to the times, borrowing what is efficient in modern methods and using it to their advantage. But the principles which are eternal were to be the rock of foundation; these principles are unchanging; manual labor is no less wholesome and ennobling in the present century than it was when Christ made farm tools at Nazareth.

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Besides these two ideas, the first in expounding the dignity of the worker's position, and the second in advocating the necessity of labor organizations, Leo contributed

mightily to the solution of the social problem by discountenancing the socialist insistence on class cleavage. Marx and his followers stressed the economic value of labor; Leo and all the thinking Catholic leaders stressed the dignity and worth of work from the metaphysical angle. Socialists and communists promoted workers' organization for their political and economic propensities in obtaining possession of the means of production. Leo proposed them as a means of living a better Christian life, and of insuring the rights due in justice to the laboring masses. Finally, he strenuously opposed the Marxian theory of the class conflict by putting in its place the principle of social harmony.

Every one knows by now the totally disproved theory of the Marxians regarding the historical class struggle; but not every one is aware of how completely the theory has fallen to the ground. The myth is still widely propagated. According to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, his collaborator, all of past history has been nothing but a series of conflicts between the upper class and the lower class, between the slave-owner and the slave, between the capitalist and the worker, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Every world-action of the past has been adumbrated by this theoretical contrast between the privileged and the underprivileged. The economic and social organization of every age grows out of this conflict, and these in turn determine the political and intellectual content of the age. The stupendous increase of the proletarian class in the industrial age has finally given it the opportunity to rise up and expropriate the expropriators.

In opposition to this fantastic and miasmal conception, Leo XIII pointed out in one of his first encyclicals, *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, that the directly contrary is the

true state of historical events. It is the very nature of society that the parts making up the organism function harmoniously to the benefit of the individual and the whole. For, as every one should know, and as the Church teaches, *quam bene feliciterque humana consisteret societas, si singula membra recte factis et virtutibus praefulgerent*. Against the socialist battle-cry for equality of all men, he sanely asserts that it is true that men are equal in having the same nature, in being called to the highest dignity of the sonship of God, in being destined to the same end, and in receiving punishment or reward according to their merits; but they are certainly unequal in abilities as is shown in the sociological principles of leadership and following, superordination and subordination, the disproportionate variety of natural capabilities.

In his great encyclical on the condition of the working classes, the *Rerum Novarum*, of 1891, Leo quotes the sagacious words of Thomas of Aquino, "As the part and the whole are in a certain sense identical, the part may in some sense claim what belongs to the whole." He applies this precept in showing that all men are equal before the state, whether they are rich or poor, weak or powerful. As a matter of objective record, the poorer classes make up the larger number of citizens, and since for all practical purposes the poor and the worker are almost synonymous terms, they are numerically the more important members of the state. "The poor are members of the national community equally with the rich; they are real component living members which constitute, through the family, the living body."

Not only is there an obligation on the part of the state to prevent the segregation of its citizens into distinct and

hostile classes; there is also an obligatory relation between those who have reached positions of wealth and power to work for the harmonious unity of society by assisting the lowlier classes. It is not mere charity Leo wants—that is, charity in the sense in which a man throws alms to an importunate beggar—but rather the performance of a duty in justice. Privileges carry with them responsibilities. The wealthy, because of their higher social position and the advantages lawfully connected with it, have a higher social responsibility to help others. Bringing the socially underprivileged up to a stratum closer to their own makes for the unity of the classes.

But Pope Leo did not place all responsibility for a better social order on the shoulders of the rich and powerful. He insisted also that the worker, proletarian, and poor person have a social duty to the corporate whole, and must perform to the best of their abilities the tasks which fall to their lot. These members of the lower classes, too, must do their part conscientiously, avoid contact with subversive forces functioning in the persons and organizations of socialistic principles. Thus, too, in so far as they are able, they lift themselves up to a closer affinity with higher social classes and work together with them in unity.

The great mistake of Marxism has been to assume, with not a semblance of historical proof, that “class is naturally hostile to class, and that the wealthy and the workingmen are intended by nature to live in mutual conflict.” To this false notion Leo opposed the Scholastic concept of the “orders,” a social hierarchy in which the different strata of society grade into one another as correlating units gearing and intermeshing smoothly for a common end higher than each has for itself. He compares civil society to a

human body and exclaims that, just as the symmetry and proportion of a human body are recognized by the proper arrangement of its various parts, so can a rightly organized and properly functioning state be known by the different classes arranged in harmony and agreement. They should, "as it were, groove into one another, so as to maintain the body politic."

It was at this point in the encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, that Pope Leo gave expression to the famous passage that has been so often repeated since its publication. He said that each class of people in the state needs the others. "Capital cannot do without Labor, nor Labor without Capital." He argues that if this root principle is kept in mind and strictly adhered to the resultant agreement will bring pleasantness to life and the beauty of good order. And it will bring peace in its wake for, as Augustine once said, "Peace is the tranquillity of order."

On the other hand, if the Marxian principle of continuous, inevitable, and violent conflict between the classes is allowed to take root among men, good order, and all that is known as commendable in civilization will vanish from the earth. This perpetual struggle among members of the same political body "produces confusion and savage barbarity." Here again, as in all human activity, man must look beyond the visible, material aspect of life, and take hold of the metaphysical value of social relations. As matters stand, there are undoubtedly many individual cases in which a person or class has a just complaint against another, but perpetuating this into class struggle in society is simply to make progress crabwise.

Every activity performed by both capital and labor in their proper spheres, from the lowest and seemingly insig-

nificant occupation to the highest, finds a place in the Leonine concept of "ordered society." There is, therefore, no inevitable collision, as the Marxian socialists maintained, between the functions of one and the other. If one cannot do without the other, it follows as a necessary corollary that there can be no mutually conflicting and disagreeing forces in society. The common destiny of all men is above the material order, and the common coöperation of all men is required so that such sublime destiny can be attained.

The entire solution of the problems affecting peace and good order can be reached by a return to Christian principles. As Leo wrote, "If Christian precepts prevail, the respective classes will not only be united in the bonds of friendship, but also in those of brotherly love." Thus, against the communist precept of mutual hate and antagonism he sets the Christian counsel of fraternal love; and if this love is realized, the classes "will understand that all men are children of the same common Father, Who is God; that all have alike the same last end, which is God Himself." And finally he asks the rhetorical question: "Would it not seem that, were society penetrated with ideas like these, strife must quickly cease?"

After a Pontificate of twenty-five years, Leo XIII died in 1903; and the general effect of his long reign on the social question was that he had given unity, direction, and sanction to the efforts of Catholic social thinkers. His ideas were not new. They were simply the application of the social teachings of Catholicism, adapted and reinforced for the modern age. Eight of his encyclicals and numerous allocutions and *orationes* bore directly or indirectly on modern social and political questions. The *Rerum No-*

varum, which was an answer to the French workers' request for an official pronouncement on the labor question, was really the crowning glory of his social teachings. He did not revolutionize Catholic thought in these matters, but merely recalled the age-old principles of Catholic social philosophy. Of all these teachings it seems to me that the most important in their effect on the modern labor movement are: his insistence on the dignity of labor, the right to association, and the necessity for mutual assistance between social classes.

IMMIGRANT STATESMAN

Carl Schurz (1829-1906)

TURNING THE PAGES OF HISTORICAL TREATISES OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY America is not an unwholesome nor altogether fruitless pastime for people suffering in the modern mood of depressiveness. To-day the query in the minds of many is a question as to whither we are going, and whether the destination is worth the trouble of the journey. Last-century America offered no such picture of sluggishness, and the amount of activity it contained should suffice to keep the country rolling along of its own momentum for many years. The cause, I think, of this novel spirit was the fact that men were enabled to rise from the lowest stratum of society to the highest office in the country, as for instance, Abraham Lincoln. It is due also to the energetic spirit of immigrants who took what they found here and molded it into a living reality for themselves and their other new Americans, as for example, Carl Schurz.

The name of Schurz is not as well known as it ought to be. To the general population of newspaper readers it is unknown, to the casual student in college and university it is barely a name; but to the student seeking the roots of

our social, economic, and political development, Schurz is a person at once intriguing and genuinely forceful. Any one who can arrive in a strange country at the age of twenty-three and become at the age of forty the first foreign-born Senator from one of its States is worthy of more than a passing glance. But Carl Schurz was more than a mere political aspirant. He was a power in the anti-slavery campaign, a critic of government at all times, a precursor of Father Coughlin's "sound money" policies, an anti-imperialist, and the prime mover for Civil Service reform.

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Schurz was an impetuous German who early learned to rationalize about everything from politics to religion. His birthplace was near Cologne, and the date of his birth was March 2, 1829, in circumstances that would awaken latent abilities in any similar child. He tells us in his *Reminiscences* that his mother's family, with whom his parents made their home, had a triple influence upon him. The old grandfather had been an *ancien militaire* in the Napoleonic campaigns and, like grandfathers everywhere, held the boy's rapt interest in factual, and, perhaps fictional, stories of military service. Four uncles on the maternal side filled the child with their own individual recollections of glorious military exploits. Even before he could read or write his father added to these by etching into his mind a very fair impression of Europe under the heel of Napoleon.

It was at that time that Germany was being kept in humiliation and degradation by the tyranny of local despots. The neighborhood about Cologne was rife with plottings and counter-plottings that would raise the siege of oppres-

sion, and every household seemed aware of the liberal trend to do away with monarchy. Discussion anent the attempts on the life of Louis Philippe of France added fuel to the blaze in the child's mind, helped to create in him a fanatic attachment for military heroes and, as he relates, laid a strong foundation for his future political opinions and sympathies.

The French Revolution was a half-century old when Schurz started his formal schooling at the Catholic Gymnasium in Cologne, and the American overthrow of English rule was even more ancient, but the ideas and principles behind these revolutions soon became the absorbing interest of his life. America was a familiar word to him, for he often witnessed the preparation and departure of local village peasants for that distant and immeasurable country. It seemed a true Utopia, a place to be reached as soon as possible, a republic where people were free to act as they pleased, without Counts, without compulsory military service, and, as he very erroneously thought, without taxation of any kind. America was the conversation piece of the day, and every scrap of information obtainable about it was eagerly perused and passed on from hand to hand.

George Washington, as the boy's father pointed out, was simply the greatest and noblest person of all history. He was the truest patriot the world had ever seen, because, instead of making himself king of the United States after commanding large armies in the war of liberation, he voluntarily divested himself of power.

The cry for freedom was in the air, and it was in some respects the cry for absolute license. Schurz was exposed to the virus of Voltaire and Rousseau when barely able to

grasp their meaning, and the freethinking spirit of the age was openly expressed in the bold quips and scoffings upon religious subjects by his uncle Ferdinand, an ardent Voltairian. The family errand-man taught the boy that the sooner he learned to form his own opinions and rely upon his own reason, the better educated he would be. "If we are to believe blindly and never think for ourselves, why did the all-wise Creator give us our reason?" A question the answer of which has brought many men closer to God, while at the same time it has been misused in sending men away from the source of reason. The insistence of his teacher, Heinrich Bone, at the Gymnasium at Cologne, was along the same lines. He taught the boy the invaluable art of writing with directness and clarity, and trained him in independent thinking.

In 1847 the youth matriculated at the University of Bonn, ancient and admirable seat of learning, and the *alma mater* of many prominent scholars and leaders, from which he was to graduate as an ardent German patriot, an accomplished and fiery orator, a militant liberal. As a member of the Burschenschaft Franconia, a patriotic student organization, Schurz was fortunate enough to learn the groundwork of humility. He found that he was not so precocious as he had imagined himself, and noticed quickly that there were fellow students with mentalities of a higher caliber than his own. This fact helped rather than hindered him in preparation for oratorical contests, for it forced him to work the harder and utilize every clever means he could find to put over his particular argument. Here, too, he developed an eagerness to administer advice where he thought it was needed, whether it was solicited or not, an eagerness which he carried with him to the United States.

It was a habit of spontaneous criticism, mostly constructive as he saw it, that was to give birth to a stream of frequently annoying letters of criticism to the presidents of the country from Lincoln down to Theodore Roosevelt.

The revolutionary precepts of men like Goethe and Schiller could not help influencing German university students of that period. Particularly Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* struck a responsive chord in the hearts of young Germans and helped to give them in a diluted and palatable form some of the bare doctrines of Rousseau. The whole of the so-called *Sturm und Drang* period had been an expression of the growing self-consciousness of the German people as a complete and independent social unity. Philosophical idealism, too, played a part in fashioning the minds of youths along independent lines.

At Bonn, Schurz came directly under the influence of two ardent nationalists in the personalities of Arndt and Kinkel. He imbibed freely of the heady rational philosophy and the generally liberal tendencies of the times. The art of speech and the theory of rhetoric was given him by a truly renowned professor, Johann Gottfried Kinkel. Under this able master he practised that quickness of wit, that facility of expression, and fiery eloquence which were later to distinguish him in his character of the youthful United States Senator from Missouri. In the lecture halls of the University of Bonn he laid the foundations for his later political career, all this despite the fact that he was to use his talents in a foreign land and in a strange language.

Besides being an outstanding teacher of rhetoric, Professor Kinkel was one of the most outspoken liberals in Germany, and he made his home the meeting place for

others of the same inclination, men and women who frankly gave vent to their opinions and sentiments in the political, religious, educational, and economic field. Schurz was an ardent admirer of this group, and a frequent guest at the home of Kinkel. In the realm of religion, the main topic of discussion at the time was the seeming non-rapprochement of Romanism and Germanism. Politically, there was a growing consciousness of approaching change, and the main line of conversation was directed along the line of proposed substitutes for the discouragement and national self-depreciation that had till then kept the country in thralldom. That direction seemed to be toward a united fatherland governed by a liberal, constitutional monarchy.

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All these undercover mutterings of German scholars and students took a decidedly practical turn with the feverish excitement accompanying the February Revolution of 1848. In March of that year Schleswig and Holstein were the scenes of open rebellion. In May the National Parliament convened for the purpose of drawing up a constitution for a newly united Germany. Schurz entered the limelight of activity by his radical *Address to The German Nation* at a national student congress at Eisenach. The other members of the Burschenschaften kept the flames of nationalism at white heat with frequent enthusiastic speeches.

Everywhere in the country nervous excitement was the normal mental state of the people, everywhere except in the Assembly, which, being a group of intellectuals rather than a body of statesmen, wasted precious time in useless debate.

In May of the following year the Assembly finally completed a constitution and demanded that the German people give full support to it. The answer was a revolution in which Schurz enlisted as a private under the leadership of the democratic Kinkel and his liberal followers. Like the intellectuals in the National Assembly, most of the rebels were unversed in either practical politics or effective military manoeuvres. They were for the most part highminded idealists who understood thoroughly the theory of free institutions from their books, had admired their workings in the current news-sheets, and knew only that they greatly desired them. The one dominant idea that possessed them was the resolution to give the German nation its liberty and provide for its unity and progress. For this they were ready to lay down life itself in open revolution, but their intended sacrifices were of little avail against a highly trained Prussian military machine.

Young Schurz seems to have been a soldier of the type of the great ancient poet Horace, for in his very first experience on the field he was scared out of his wits. The insurgents retreated to the fortress of Rastatt where they were besieged, and from which Schurz and two others escaped through a city sewer and finally got into Switzerland. In 1850 he returned to complete a daring plan of liberating Kinkel from his prison at Spandau, an exploit that made of him a glamorous hero and turned him overnight from an unknown private into a nationally known figure.

But the feat that gave him national notoriety deprived him of his fatherland. He fled to France where in 1851 he was told by the French police that the government demanded his immediate withdrawal from French terri-

tory. Apparently the adherents of Louis Napoleon's régime had troubles enough with local revolutionists without entertaining those of other countries. His next destination was London. Here he came into contact with prominent exiles of other countries, Kossuth from Hungary, Mazzini from Italy and Louis Blanc from France, all of whom formed a coterie of celebrated rebels. They were of the opinion that a great and widespread revolution was soon to rock the entire continent, and Schurz felt that his own fatherland needed his leadership. He followed events at home very closely until the *coup d'état* of Napoleon in December, 1851, convinced him that the revolution of 1848 had lost its impetus, and that Europe was again settling down into its earlier state.

The long thoughts of his student days and the ardent hopes of his military plans had come to nothing. Schurz felt that ideals he had learned to treasure could not die within him, and that he must find some place where he could make them produce fruit. He was desperately ambitious and very earnest about making some person or some nation the recipient of his cherished democratic principles. Like most men with an idea, Schurz wanted to see his own put into practice, and it is probably this thought that made his resolution to emigrate to America a practical one. He set out for the "new world, a free world, a world of great ideas and great aims;" he would travel to a place that could give him definite goals and objects to attain.

Schurz' letters of this period reveal him as the isolated patriot pining in exile; he was still in love with his fatherland, but he was more in love with the idea of liberty; he was weary of the futile inactivities of refugees and felt a pressing necessity for absorbing labor on a large scale. If

it were impossible for him to be a free citizen of a free Germany—and that hope was definitely growing fainter and fainter—he wished to become a citizen of free America. There he could find a more expansive field to receive the abundant vitality which he felt he could turn to advantage both for himself and for the citizens of that country. There he would find a mighty, surging, restless people whose nature was closely akin to his and who kept exploring and developing further frontiers.

Like the sound family man he was, Schurz knew that a stranger in a foreign country had need of some family ties, had need of a wife and home and children. This was not the only reason he married Margarethe Meyer—he was in love with her—but it was an important item in making up his mind to marry before sailing for America. She was the daughter of a wealthy Jewish manufacturer of Hamburg, and gave up a very comfortable home to follow the twenty-three-year-old exile into a new and rough country.

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That was in 1852. The bridal couple left for the United States in August and arrived in this country with all the trepidation that usually accompanies immigrants debarking at Ellis Island. Perhaps not with the same amount of trepidation, for Schurz must have had the strange idea that America was populated largely by German-speaking citizens, for he seems to have been amazed that he could not take an immediate part in all public and private affairs. The simple reason was that he was not at all adept in the use of the English tongue. The slight experience he had

had of the language in London was insufficient for the extensive use to which he wished to put it, and he speaks of his "consternation" at the realization of this fact.

But it was impossible to discourage a man of Schurz' zeal and abilities. Here was a new obstacle to remove, and he set to work at the study of the language in his systematic way. Grammars were for schoolboys, and anyway, Schurz was interested in the politics of the new world, so instead of following orthodox and traditional school-room methods, he read magazines and newspapers to the constant accompaniment of turning dictionary pages. Novels and classics in the English language were read aloud by Schurz and his wife, and while one was reading the other thumbed the dictionary for the explanation of the most difficult modern language. It has often been a source of amazement how immigrants can possibly master the use and pronunciation of English terms within a number of years, but Schurz claims that within six months he could carry on a conversation with ease, and could write a letter in the American idiom. The man had no qualms about telling of his achievements.

Financial worries seem to have been shouldered by his wife, for there were no sordid monetary cares to prevent him from devoting his time to the study of American politics and the lives of American statesmen. Undoubtedly the Jewish merchant of Hamburg had supplied them with sufficient resources for study and travel till they could obtain a financial footing. In the winter of 1853-54 Schurz went to the source of American government, Washington, where he spent some time in observing the workings of the legislative body. That he was not immediately dis-

couraged from further research of American democracy seems a fair indication of the comparative wholesomeness of politics at that time.

In his writings Schurz states that he was present at the Congressional Session of that year as an unprejudiced and disinterested spectator, but the fact is that he was an intensely interested one, and was able to investigate the ramifications of American policies, receive inspiration for future political reform, and give a direction to the methods he would pursue. There is no doubting the fact that he felt himself fully capable of righting mistakes in government circles, and of advising the ruling members of Democracy on manners and means of procedure. His letters written at that time to his wife in Philadelphia constantly reveal a cocky self-assurance and self-confidence that he attempts tactfully to conceal in his other writings.

In the light of political and social reforms which he later advocated it is interesting to summarize the result of his first observation of democratic governmental policies. The critical attitude of a thinking outsider is almost always an interesting sidelight on accomplishments which native citizens take for granted, or suffer with apathy. At the time of his first observations Schurz had the following ideas:

1. He thought that American Democracy, though badly misinterpreted by some of the early statesmen, and poorly administered under Pierce, had not been altogether a failure. He was satisfied that improvements could be made, and that he should remain to take advantage of what the country could offer him, and to give the country the undoubted benefits he could offer it. He wrote to Kinkel: "I feel that here I can accomplish something. I

am convinced of it when I consider the qualities of the men now conspicuous."

2. He desired to know the quickest way in which he could get into the stream of American political activity, and was assured that a foreigner who established citizenship in one of the new western states stood a chance of becoming, in a very short time, a Congressman from that state. Schurz knew that he needed political prominence before he could make himself a force in his adopted country. As he wrote to his wife, "I feel that I might be able to do something worthwhile in this sphere, if once I had become actively and officially a part of it. . . . Nature has endowed me with a goodly capacity that only waits on opportunity to make itself useful." He had not the least hesitancy in reiterating to his wife that his own abilities were far above those of most other men, and she, as becomes a dutiful *hausfrau* of the ancient vintage, cheered him lustily from the fireside.

3. The question of slavery came immediately into his line of vision and was just as immediately categorized as an unmitigated evil. It was wholly inimical to his German democratic principles, and he would definitely and continuously oppose its extension. He had discerned that liberal tendencies of the political Democratic Party had been abused to mislead the majority of German-American citizens to a support of the slave interests. The disenchantment of his fellow immigrants on this score was to be one of his prime considerations.

4. Schurz was not blind to the occasional corruption of American politics, and to the current abuses of the infamous spoils-system it employed. It displeased him mightily, but it did not discourage him. He wrote to his wife

that the rebellious fire of 1848 was again coursing through his veins at the sight of these abuses. He assured her that the true vocation of his life lay here where his endeavors could reach out to wide national reforms and to specific and necessary national problems.

* * *

Schurz' Americanization was rapid and complete. In the following year, 1855, he bought real estate at Watertown, Wisconsin, joined the Republican Party there, and in 1856 was elected delegate to the Republican State Convention. Slavery was the burning issue of the day, and the Republicans were ardent abolitionists. Schurz considered Douglas "the very embodiment of that unscrupulous, reckless demagoguery" that was so dangerous in liberal, democratic countries. He thought that Douglas was wantonly jeopardizing the cause of freedom in the interest of personal ambition. Slavery was undermining the Union, and he argued forcefully against it in his public speeches from a constitutional, philanthropic, and philosophic point of view. "The question was not a mere quarrel between two geographical sections of the country; not a mere contest between two economic interests for preponderance; not a mere struggle between two political parties for power and spoils; but the great struggle between two antagonistic systems of social organization; between advancing civilization and retreating barbarism; between the human conscience and a burning wrong."

Schurz became a power in the newly formed Republican Party, and for two years lectured frequently against slavery in most of the northern states. In 1859 he appeared in

Boston, the very heart of Nativism, and there flayed unmercifully the slave-trade and the slave-traders. The following year saw him enter the battle for "Lincoln and Liberty," and become one of the most fiery of those orators who went about arousing the "public conscience." In 1861, as Minister to Spain, he wrote that the war was "nothing less than a grand uprising of the popular conscience in favor of a great humanitarian principle." When he thought the North needed his military services he abandoned his high-salaried position to become a General in the Union army. After the Civil War he held to his first principles and joined the radical Republicans who demanded unconditional and immediate suffrage for the Negro.

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The next great necessity to demand Schurz' attention was the matter of Civil Service administration. From the start he had been disgusted with the blundering of statesmen and the outright plundering of politicians, and further amazed that a fairly intelligent nation should allow such procedures. "Dipping into the Pork Barrel" and distributing patronage, while they were practices not then as widespread and accepted in politics as they are to-day, were sufficiently shocking to influence Schurz, when he became Senator in 1869, toward a rabid advocacy of Civil Service reform.

It seems to me that of all proposals made by the foreign-born statesman the most important was this demand for political house cleaning. But its effect on modern political machinery is practically nil. In January of 1871, in a speech before the United States Senate, he made a reasoned

plea for reform of the system of political appointments, and in it outlined arguments that are just as applicable in our present day.

Schurz contended that public offices made by appointment were treated as conquests of a political party instead of vocations in which a man could do his duty to the nation. The natural effect of such a system upon human frailties led to temptation to power and financial self-interest. "The Spoils System," he said, "had made the atmosphere of the Executive Mansion so thick with favor-seeking flattery that the sound-waves of an independent public opinion can no longer penetrate it." Through its usage, constitutional balance was disturbed because the legislators, by their right of recommendation, and the Executive, by his right of patronage, influenced each other unduly. A "political proletariat" was created by the periodic redistribution of jobs. The system as a whole had a demoralizing effect upon the people in that actions which were considered positively dishonorable in private life were countenanced in public life.

Abraham Lincoln himself had predicted that this evil would, if left unchecked, become far worse than the disaster of the Civil War. Schurz' attitude on Civil Service reform guided his political allegiance for almost all the rest of his life. He proposed a Reform Bill, only to find that senatorial pressure and the attitude of President Grant himself caused it to be dropped in 1875. Sincere and high-minded idealist that he was, he could not understand opposition in matters so important for good government. He could not see the continual muddling along in slipshod methods, especially when those methods were flagrantly dishonest. In 1872 he fought against Grant's reelection,

and in 1876 supported Hayes with the hope that reform would take place.

Upon his election President Hayes appointed Schurz Secretary of the Interior and gave him full support when Schurz showed that he was no mere impractical theorist in the matter of office appointments. The new cabinet member did not even bring his own private secretary with him; he removed no one except for cause; promoted men only on merit; there were no vacancies made, hence no recommendations to be entertained. The example he set met with no favorable legislation from Congress, but general interest and sympathy with the experiment were so great that thirty states formed Civil Service Reform Leagues. The National League was founded in 1881, and Schurz, as the "watch-dog of the Civil Service," was its president till 1901. Once he had caught public interest in his reform measures, he continued to keep it alive through the press and by means of lectures. He campaigned for presidential candidates who conformed to his ideas on reform, and willingly administered advice to them when they were in office.

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Schurz, while giving the outward appearance of a man who wanted always the political limelight, was at heart an idealist. And it was this genuine idealism which made him proclaim repeatedly that it was the "cause" and not the Party to which he owed his allegiance. He urged his audiences to disregard party lines and to look to the objective worth of all proposals for the commonwealth. They should think for themselves and not be mere blind followers of

political "ward heelers." He argued strongly for a non-partizan attitude in the Lincoln presidential campaign, pointing out that the Democratic Party was soliciting votes of German-Americans against Nativism and Know-nothingism, while at the same time they were upholding slave interests.

In an address on *Political Morals*, given after the Republican victory in 1860, he gave his views on partizanship, and at the same time excoriated party politics which had degenerated into a mere machinery of despotism. "It must be our principal object," he orated, "not only to catch the people's votes for our candidate, but to enlist in our cause the people's conscience. . . . Address yourself to their moral nature and their consciences will enlighten their understanding. Then you will organize the party of independent men. This independence will keep the rank and file vigilant, and that vigilance will keep the leaders upright and honest." He argued that the liberty, honor, and prestige of the American republic could not be maintained unless the norm of political morals be raised, and the only way this could be accomplished was by the moral independence of the people at the polls.

Missouri was the scene of Schurz' great experiment in upholding his principle of freedom for all after the Civil War. The radical wing of the Republican Party wished to exclude all ex-Confederate soldiers from the ballot in 1870, but Schurz fought them by organizing all the liberal Republicans with the Democrats and thus obtained a reconstruction program for that state. In the following year he attempted to right the misgovernment and corruption of the Grant régime by launching a new political party, the Liberal Republicans. Their Cincinnati convention in 1872

was a failure, and the new party could not keep Grant out of the presidency; but the foundation of better communication between the reform elements had been laid, and at the next presidential elections, four years later, made possible the formation of the Independent Party. These Independents were a sort of club which Schurz held over the heads of both Republican and Democrat politicians, in that they refused to nominate a candidate of their own, and pledged themselves to support no candidate who was not publicly known to possess those qualities of mind and character which the task of genuine reform required.

The Independents were criticized and publicized far and wide, but they held the upper hand. One of the Tammany leaders, active in the notorious Tweed Ring of New York City, said of them: "They have reënacted the moral law and the Ten Commandments for their platform, and have demanded an angel of light for President." As in most political affairs of such high nature, Schurz found in the end that he usually had to choose the less objectionable of two unsatisfactory candidates. In 1876 he led his followers to back Hayes against the Democrat Tilden, and in 1880 accepted Garfield, though he later criticized him severely for upholding party harmony at the expense of the policy of Civil Service reform.

When the Republicans in 1884 nominated Blaine, a man whose public reputation was anything but savory, Schurz felt that the party of moral reform had collapsed; he campaigned against Blaine that year from the first week in August till Election Day, not as a politician with an ax to grind, but as a private citizen with a duty to perform. The Republican hopes were wrecked mostly through the earlier efforts of Schurz toward making the voters think before

going to the polls, and partly also by the energetic campaign he carried on all over the country just prior to the elections.

In the two following presidential campaigns Schurz was a Democrat; but in the election of 1896, when the issue was between the high-protectionist East and the free-silver West, he worked in favor of the Republican nominee. In 1900 he again made a switch of parties, and though he had no admiration for the democratic apostle of free silver, he felt that it was more important to defeat the imperialist tendencies of the Republicans than to worry too much about the personal integrity of the Democratic candidate. In all these campaigns Schurz was ever in the public eye, and it is due to him above all others that there arose a consistent group of independent thinkers in politics. He did more than any one else to show that while this is a government essentially of two parties, it is also one that can, if the voters will take the trouble to think, be tempered by an unselfish, enlightened, and patriotic independent opinion.

* * *

Besides his apostleship of Civil Service reform and demand for non-partisanship on the part of voters, there were three other important contributions made by Schurz during his public life. The first is a constantly burning current question; the two others flicker occasionally into new interest. They were his attitude on monetary problems, on American imperialism, and on the Indian question.

On the first question, that of sound money, he wittily made the remark in one of his speeches that men grow

wiser fooling with inflation, but men seldom profit from the experiences of others. "Why, gentlemen of the fiat money persuasion, the Chinese, a thousand years ago, were just as wise and progressive as you are now, and when they got through with their great progressive fiat money experiences they were a great deal wiser." He believed that there were eternal laws of nature in this matter of money, and that all the wild fiscal experiments, financial tricks, and subtleties of men could not prevail to outwit them. In explaining these laws of sound currency, Schurz intended to prove that the craze for inflation was fostered by politicians who cared more for immediate and momentary prosperity than for an ultimately sound and lasting benefit.

He contended that the essential features of all schemes for fiat money were virtually the same. It was paper money, or, as the more modern expression has it, "credit money" or "check-book money," based in some indefinite way upon an indefinite something; sometimes there was a promise of redemption, and in other cases it was used for speculative purposes. Whenever inflation of paper money was undertaken, whether through supposed necessity or through actual intention, the final result could be nothing other than a depreciation of the money unit, which would lead on to further depreciation by the issuance of more paper money. The end result is financial panic.

That men should attempt to increase artificially the wealth of a nation which could be genuinely increased only by hard work and careful management was incomprehensible to Carl Schurz. He pointed out that the inflationist plan was at best a stop-gap, one, however, that would allow the flow of irredeemable paper currency to become even-

tually so strong that the resumption of specie-payment would have to be put off into the vague and distant future.

His historical argument was that after every financial collapse due to inflation process people came painfully again to the same conclusion that the only safe basis of any money system is the amount of precious metal available. He opposed bi-metalism with the same force that he had used against inflation. In 1896 the speech he delivered before representatives of the American Honest Money League was a scathing denunciation of the free-silver heresy, joined with a defense of the gold standard. Perhaps his money platform did not put him before the public as dramatically and spectacularly as some of his other achievements, but he nevertheless performed a genuine service in helping people to keep their heads.

Despite the belligerent attitude of his early years and the devoted fondness he entertained for military heroes, Schurz was at heart a pacifist. And it was probably this trait of character more than any other that induced him to distrust the spread of American imperialism, and the consequent expansion of military activities that must go along with it. As early as 1870, when he was a Senator in the Grant régime, he openly denounced the annexation of Santo Domingo. Territory in the tropics meant for him the suppression of the natives and the extension of the American military arm used to overthrow the very principles upon which this nation's democracy was builded. In 1897 he became the sworn political enemy of President McKinley whose annexation policy in regard to Hawaii was most distasteful to him. Disregarding the economic factors involved in the Spanish-American fiasco, and the patriotic frenzy to which agitators had whipped the nation,

he warned the President not to allow the "war" to degenerate into one "of greedy ambition, conquest, self-aggrandizement."

It is hard to dislike or find fault with a man who consistently sticks to his principles, and, though it is difficult to see that Schurz' proposals regarding Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines were at that time practical, one cannot help admiring his thoroughgoing distrust of imperialism. He advised the President not to annex any of the former Spanish colonies, but to make Cuba and Porto Rico independent countries, and to hand over the Philippine Islands to some minor country such as Belgium or Holland, "not likely to excite special jealousy" in the world of nations. His contention was that the United States must remain the one great neutral power of the world.

In his speech in 1899 on *The Issue of Imperialism* Schurz used practical historical arguments to answer every argument proposed by the advocates of colonization. He showed the difficulties of maintaining foreign possessions: they were in tropical climates, their populations were sufficiently dense in some sections to allow autonomy; they were heterogeneous and not Anglo-Saxon in origin; and their protection required a formidable increase in both army and navy. From a moral standpoint he argued that the war of liberation and humanity had in every case turned into an act of criminal aggression.

During the four years of his service as Secretary of the Interior under President Hayes, Schurz was able to accomplish much for the badly treated Indian tribes of Western America. The Indians were a real problem to which Schurz brought his common sense and fundamental honesty as well as the generous sympathy which still existed in his

heart toward every down-trodden and maligned people. He was a fool for liberty, but he believed that citizenship with its privileges and responsibilities could not be enjoyed by the Indians till they had been supplied with an educational system, active and progressive work, fixed homes, and well secured private property. Whatever now remains of statesmanlike management on the Indian reservations is originally due to Schurz' efforts on behalf of the Redmen. He made a six weeks' personal investigation into their affairs in the West, and was able to achieve a definite advance in the elimination of corruption, the promotion of efficiency, and the establishment of peaceful living conditions. His progress, however, was necessarily slow, for he was fighting against the inertia of a partially civilized people on the one hand, and the depravity of self-seeking officials on the other.

Into the political, economic, and social maelstrom of nineteenth-century America, Carl Schurz cast an influence that was definitely helpful. Burning with the desire to right wrongs, extend the frontiers of liberty, and, incidentally, make use of his undoubted abilities as a leader of men, he offers an example of the achievements possible to an energetic man. Perhaps his example can be followed in modern America, perhaps it is already too late, and we have already allowed western civilization to disintegrate too far; at any rate, it is a wholesome thought to remember that such men helped in the creation and maintenance of democratic ideals. He died in 1906.

TOLSTOY AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)

THE THEORY OF COMMUNIST CLASS STRUGGLE WAS originated by Marx, publicized by Engels, and put into actual operation by Lenin and Stalin; but without Tolstoy it would have been no more successful in Russia than it was in Germany and France. My proposition is that Tolstoy was more responsible than any one else in preparing the Russian mind for the acceptance of the present régime. Of course, Pushkin, Turgenev, Dostoyevski and the active Russian revolutionists of the last century, the autocracy of the Tsars, and, finally, the stupidity of Rasputin and the Tsaritsa, all these were contributing factors, but none of them are, in my opinion, as important as Tolstoy.

The means used by Count Tolstoy in his rôle of precursor to the revolution are several. Most important were his writings which were read in almost every language of Europe, and which made him during the last ten years of his life the best-known person of the period; secondly, the theories he held regarding almost every species of political and social reform; thirdly, the actual practice in his own life of what he preached, by which he drew hundreds of

followers around him. He had become so renowned a figure that even the Tsar, whatever his wishes, dared not suppress him.

Leo Tolstoy was born in August, 1828, three years after the historic Decembrists inefficiently attempted to end the tyranny of Tsardom by open revolt in St. Petersburg. It was not the rising of the mass against the class but rather an idealistic scheme of certain officers who had learned much in the campaigns against Napoleon, and who aimed at a complete reformation of the Russian State, and possibly the institution of a republic modeled on the United States. The uprising ended with the execution of five leaders and the exile of hundreds of lesser conspirators. Thus at the birth of Tolstoy complete autocracy again had the country well in its grasp.

The division of his life into four parts is rather interesting, for he himself makes it in his memoirs. The first is of fourteen years duration, "The innocent, joyous, poetic time of childhood"; the second, lasting till his marriage at the age of thirty-four, is "full of ambition, vanity, and licentiousness"; the third comprised his eighteen years of complacent family life and quiet egotism; the last period he dates from his "conversion" to the practical teachings of the Gospel, and ended with his death in 1910.

In investigating the work and influence of any man it is quite necessary to know the personal background of his life and the sources from which he drew his inspiration. Particularly is this true of Tolstoy. His birthplace was the aristocratic country estate of his parents at Yasnaya Polyana, one hundred and thirty miles southeast of Moscow. Thus, unlike Marx, Engels, and even Stalin, he was a typical Russian, for Russian activity was, and still is, con-

centrated chiefly about Moscow and St. Petersburg (now Leningrad).

Rapid and sudden changes took place in the personnel of the young Count's guardianship. His mother died when he was a baby of two years, his father when he was nine, and the Countess of Osten-Saken, who took over the duties of a parent, died when he was twelve. There was a similar variety of instructors in his youth. He was educated along aristocratic lines by a succession of French, German, and Russian tutors till his matriculation at the University of Kazan. Possibly this insecurity and change at a time when impressions are most easily made formed the seeds of his subsequent restlessness.

The activities going on in other parts of Europe during Tolstoy's boyhood, and related to him by his tutors, had a lasting effect on his imagination. The Russo-Turkish War had ended in 1829 with the treaty of Adrianople, by which the empire was extended into the Caucasus. A year later a wave of revolutions swept Europe, manifested by uprisings in France, Belgium, Poland, Italy, and South Germany, all of them resulting partly from the discontented condition of the lower classes, and partly as the aftermath of the Napoleonic campaigns. In England serious danger of a revolution was averted only by the passage of the great Reform Bill, which was a distinct thrust at the privileged classes, and a direct attack against excessive plutocracy. Within a year of each other, Louis Blanc published his *Organization of Labor*, and Pierre Proudhon his *What Is Property?*, works that were to have great significance to revolutionists during the next half-century.

But to return to Tolstoy. The end of the first period of his life found him a student at the University of Kazan

(later to be the Alma Mater of Lenin), and here began what he was pleased to term the "wild portion" of his life. In reality, he was, in the beginning at least, intensely devoted to the discovery of those theories which had been denied him in his childhood. Here at the University he found the works of Rousseau; read them avidly and continued an ardent admirer of the French philosopher till the end of his days. In his first novel entitled *Childhood*, which he wrote ten years later, Tolstoy makes it apparent that Rousseau had a profound influence over him, and in his declining years he still shows that influence. The boy studied oriental languages in his first year, and law in the two following years, intending to prepare himself for the diplomatic service. But studies proved irksome and the city attractions pleasant; the result was his departure from the University and the end of his formal education.

At the age of eighteen Count Leo Tolstoy, with two elder brothers, came into possession of the family estate at Yasnaya Polyana, and they decided to attempt farming on a profitable basis. The venture proved a failure, probably because Tolstoy spent a great deal of his time pursuing the "night life" on frequent trips to Moscow. At any rate, he next joined the Junkers' corps as an ensign in the guerilla warfare against the mountaineers in the Caucasus. After this experience he traveled in Europe for a while, settled again on his country estate, and married the well-educated and well-to-do Sophie Bers in 1862.

The third period of his life began then and witnessed Tolstoy in the quiet and prosperous life of a rich country gentleman. During this period he wrote—sometimes re-writing a chapter seven times, Countess Tolstoy being his amanuensis—*War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, which

novels are undoubtedly Russia's greatest contribution to the world's literature. The former, though in three volumes and in much detail, is insufficient from the historical point of view. As Prince Mirsky has said, "It is not a picture of the time as it was but of the time as it would have been if peopled by men and women of a later mentality." The elements of the class struggle were clearly diagnosed by Tolstoy in both these novels.

During this part of the Count's life, up to his so-called conversion, there were many important happenings going on in Europe, of the significance of which he was fully aware. The height of the Oxford Movement had been reached, the Chartists rose for greater reforms, were replaced by the Christian Socialists, and another revolutionary movement, that of 1848, disturbed all of Europe with the exception of Russia. The *Communist Manifesto* was published. The Crimean War, in which Tolstoy had served at Sebastapol, ended ingloriously for Russia, and Alexander II began his long reign as Tsar. The liberation of the serfs, revolution in Russian Poland, governmental and legal reforms, an attempt on the life of the Tsar, all kept Russian social thinkers agog. The publication of Marx's *Das Kapital*, the disturbances of the Paris Commune, the activities of German socialists, the spread of English imperialism to India, and finally, the Russo-Turkish War, all of these significant affairs took place while Tolstoy was enjoying the peace and quiet of local squirearchy.

The final period of the Count's life, according to his own division, has the greatest bearing on his part in the preparation of Russia for the class struggle. It was then he formulated the philosophy of society now known as Tolstoyism, a partly negative doctrine of non-resistance more

akin to Buddhism than to Christianity, although it was founded on the Sermon on the Mount. "It involved, among other things," writes Mirsky, "the negation of all modern civilization as tending to increase the inequality of men. It is profoundly rationalistic. It rejects for purely rationalistic motives the doctrine of future life and all the sacramental teaching of the Church."

Another gospel that found its way into the simple formulation of Tolstoyism is Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, published in 1880, and strangely coincidental with Tolstoy's conversion. In the remaining years of his active writing the land scheme of George is never far from his mind, indeed it receives much consideration in *Resurrection*, and seems to have been the solution which the lovable character, Levin, was seeking in the earlier novel, *Anna Karenina*. Spencer's *Social Statistics* was another profound influence on him while in the stage of evolving the Tolstoyist interpretation of the New Testament.

In 1902 the Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church excommunicated Tolstoy, and eight years later he died. In his last years he was often comforted by the presence of his friend Maxim Gorky, upon whom his teachings had little effect. With other people Tolstoy conversed about universal charity, the Gospels, Buddhism, and love of God, but with Gorky, the amiable atheist, these subjects were excluded. They could not be treated on a common footing. During that last decade all the world was looking toward him, and people from China, India, America, were visiting him and corresponding with him; "from everywhere living, throbbing threads stretch out to him; his soul is for all and forever." No man, with the possible exception of

Napoleon and Lenin, achieved as great a world reputation while still living as did Count Leo Tolstoy.

* * *

There are many ways in which Tolstoy prepared the mind of the Russian peasant, and warned the mind of the Russian noble, for the approach of the proletarian uprising. His theory and practice of education, since he undertook them in his youth, were the first of those means. On his return to the parental estate after the Crimean War, Tolstoy took up seriously the duties of a country overlord, among which was the organization of village schools. He felt that up to that time there had been no adequate system fit to educate the children of peasants for their particular life, and he promptly set in motion his theory of practical knowledge for them. In his own estimation, society was always divided into peasant and peer; there was no middle class, and, as an expected corollary, he insisted that the education of the two classes must be distinctly different. Rural children were to learn only those subjects which would fit them for their station in life.

But the matter was not quite as novel as the method in Tolstoy's scheme. He had investigated carefully the systematic training of the German schools. There he found that teachers were zealous disciplinarians, lovers of theory, strictly adhering to formality in rule and regulation. And this knowledge of German pedagogical science tended merely to strengthen his belief that enforcing education from above instead of allowing it to sprout from below would never answer the fundamental needs of the peasants. He therefore instituted a revolutionary method of teach-

ing, refraining from compulsory lessons, rewards and punishments, discipline, formal instruction. His method, in practice, was methodless. It marked the "first complete putting into practice of his theory of 'non-compulsion' of the individual by Society," and it showed markedly the influence of his early Rousseauvian thinking.

Tolstoy's was an official position and extended to the schools of the neighborhood, into all of which he put his educational ideas. He inculcated these principles into the school-masters of the locality who were under his jurisdiction, and it was not long before he had Rousseau's dictum of the "subordination of discipline to the natural abilities of man" in effect in all his schools. To spread his views beyond the immediate neighborhood he edited an educational magazine and submitted articles to others.

But this sort of thing could not go on in the Russia of that day. His attempt to supplant the ancient system of pedagogy with one that would make his pupils "fall in love with the book, with learning, and with me," soon came to the notice of the Minister of Education. As was to be expected, it met with his strict opposition. An educational system of such type, administered by enthusiastic teachers, could have led to a social attitude quite subversive to the autocratic capitalistic system. It would have questioned even the utility of the whole modern set-up. The official blow fell when Tolstoy was absent in June, 1862, taking a Koumiss cure in Samara. The police paid a surprise visit to his home and school, searching every room and corner of them for revolutionary documents that were not there. A revolutionary in education, the Count was never a political seditious.

Tolstoy's status as an aristocrat, and his growing reputa-

tion as an author, kept him then, and all during his life, from any personal persecution on the part of Russian officials, but the insult offered him and his theories on this occasion made him abandon formal educational work. As is obvious to any one with the least insight into pedagogical procedure, the liberal system of Tolstoy, as applied by him, could never work. It was based on a part truth, that is, on the recognition of those instincts upon which all true education must be built, but he failed in the very essential. He did not know how to entice and control those instincts in his pupils so that they would at the same time learn what they should, and enjoy what they were learning.

Again, there is the fact that Tolstoy, with his aristocratic background and careful tutoring, had no clear concept, at least in the beginning, of the type of training needed by the peasants in his schools. Of higher learning achieved through conventional education, he said years later, it "consists of those forms and that knowledge which will separate a man from others. Its object is the same as that of cleanliness; to separate one from the mass of the poor, in order that those cold and hungry people may not see how we make holiday."

In reality, what Tolstoy was doing for the peasants in regard to education was merely keeping them in ignorance. He was always on the side of the poor and the down-trodden, it is true, but at the same time he believed firmly that certain people are born into certain conditions, and they should not rise above them. He did not intend that their living conditions should not be improved, or their work lightened, or their enjoyments increased; all this Tolstoy conceded, and even worked for, but to him the

mass remained always the mass. What he did for them was not real education, for, as Hutchins says, "Education makes people think, and thinking may make them dissatisfied. Thoughtful dissatisfaction has produced most of the things which are indispensable to civilized life." Tolstoy's scheme for the peasants prevented rather than encouraged thought.

Culture is seldom dissociated from the surroundings in which one believes he has found it; and it was the Count's mistake to confuse true culture with Russia's upper-class and luxurious refinement. In condemning the obvious errors that follow the fringe of man's ordering of life, he failed to observe the essential benefits that flow from order. By hallowing ignorance on the one side, and advocating complete freedom from the restrictions of order on the other, he was preparing proletarians for the ugly social mood that would later characterize them. The idea back of Tolstoy's theory of education seems to be that the instincts should be developed to their full extent; and at the same time the intellect was neglected simply because he felt that the peasant was not in great possession of the latter. Thus he tended to preserve a class consciousness which kept the socially oppressed apart from the socially favored; and he failed to understand that the class limitation he was fostering could never lead to a true consciousness of inner worth on the part of the individual peasant.

Thus the Count's system of education for the peasant; but what is likewise socially important is his idea of education for the upper class. The example for his aristocratic equals he showed in what he considered an ample education for his own sons. He thought that education, in that it gives a knowledge of life and of human nature, is excel-

lent and necessary to enable us to serve our fellow-man, but if it is merely a mark of personal progress, by which we can enslave our fellow-man economically and socially, it is definitely harmful. In 1887 Tolstoy ceased to concern himself over his sons' education because he thought they had reached a knowledge sufficient to carry out the first point. His wife insisted that the boys should go on with their formal studies, and when his oldest son was graduated from the University, and asked his father's advice about a future career, Tolstoy advised him to become a manual laborer on one of the peasant's farms. In reality he did not pay much attention to his children's education, although, like most men of genius, he thought it quite natural that they should have a knowledge of everything. By the insistence of the Countess Tolstoy, tutors and governesses were employed, and in the end all the children received an education fitting the aristocracy.

To the end of his life Tolstoy clung to his insistence on liberty in education, despite the fact that the schemes he put forth failed of themselves. Equality of opportunity in the same class was his goal. In the first flush of youthful enthusiasm he had defined education as "a human activity having for its basis a desire for equality, and the constant tendency to advance in knowledge," and even in one of the last conversations before his death he said, "In education also, the only way is liberty! A child's mind is sometimes quite obtuse to some sciences, though ready to seize upon and ardently absorb other subjects."

It is not that Tolstoy in all these schemes did not understand the peasant mind; it was simply that he had set for himself a definite formula, one that was bound to have its repercussions if adhered to in Russia. He had at one time

objected to Gorky's handling of peasant characters in his story, and exclaimed that in actual life what peasants say is "silly and incoherent, and at first you cannot make out what a peasant wants to say. That is done deliberately; under the silliness of their words is always concealed a desire to allow the other person to show what is in his mind. A good peasant will never show at once what is in his own mind; it is not profitable. He knows that people approach a stupid man frankly and directly, and that's the very thing he wants. You stand revealed before him, and he sees at once all your weak points."¹ But even with his understanding of the peasant mind and his later attempt to live like a peasant, Tolstoy was never able to devise an educational scheme that could take root in the lower classes.

* * *

The second of Tolstoy's unconscious heralds of class conflict in Russia was his adherence to Henry George's socialistic land scheme by which he hoped to do away with the distressing poverty observable all over Russia. That the Count knew the wretched condition of the lower class and that he fully sympathized with it is apparent in everything he wrote. But he was unable to find a workable solution to the problem till George's famous book, *Progress and Poverty*, appeared.

Never far below the surface of even his most romantic novels there lurked the spirit of the reformer that was Tolstoy. To him the important character of *Anna Karenina* was not the lady of that name but rather the landowner

¹ Maxim Gorky, *Reminiscences of Tolstoy*, New York (1920), Huebsch, p. 11.

Levin who was the mouthpiece of Tolstoy's ideas and in almost every detail the personification of his actions. In his own life the author had decided that profit without work was an evil, and he makes Levin say, "All profit that is out of proportion to the labor expended is dishonest. . . . Such as banking, for instance. It's an evil—the amassing of huge fortunes without labor, just the same thing as with the spirit monopolies, it's only the form that's changed. *Le roi est mort, vive le roi*. No sooner were the spirit monopolies abolished than the railways came up, and banking companies; that, too, profit without work."²

Try as he would in putting his land scheme into operation, Levin came again and again to the core of the problem, the apathy of propertyless peasants, and could do nothing about it. "It was for his interests that every laborer should work as hard as possible, and that while doing so he should keep his wits about him. What the laborer wanted was to work as pleasantly as possible, with rests, and above all, carelessly and heedlessly, without thinking. . . . The laborers won't work at all, and won't work with good implements. Our laborer can do nothing but get drunk like a pig, and when he's drunk he ruins everything you give him . . . the whole level of husbandry has fallen . . . the wealth of the country has decreased."

But Levin would not give up. He kept reading and studying the socialist and economic works of the time, trying to form a plan that was practical. "The business of reorganizing the farming of his land absorbed him as completely as though there would never be anything else in his life. He read the books lent him by Sviazhsky, and

² Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*, Philadelphia, Macrae Smith, tr. by Constance Garnett, p. 743.

copying out what he had not got, he read both the economic and socialistic books on the subject, but, as he had anticipated, found nothing bearing on the scheme he had undertaken. In the books on political economy—in Mill, for instance—whom he studied first with great ardor, hoping every minute to find an answer to the questions that were engrossing him, he found laws deduced from the condition of land culture in Europe; but he did not see why these laws, which did not apply in Russia, must be general. He saw just the same thing in the socialistic books: either they were the beautiful but impractical fantasies which had fascinated him when he was a student, or they were attempts at improving, rectifying the economic position in which Europe was placed, with which the system of land tenure in Russia had nothing in common. Political economy told him that the laws by which the wealth of Europe had been developed, and was developing, were universal and unvarying. Socialism told him that development along these lines leads to ruin. And neither of them gave an answer, or even a hint, in reply to the question what he, Levin and all the Russian peasants and landowners, were to do with their millions of hands and millions of acres, to make them as productive as possible for the common weal.”³

But all this was taking place after the emancipation of the serfs, when one could hardly expect them to turn suddenly into responsible owners, and before Henry George’s work fell into the hands of Tolstoy. Then it was that he found himself in the mood to solve the land question, and to the end of his life he never wavered in holding that private property should be abolished. From George’s single-tax system it is but a step to the leveling of the classes.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 410-37.

In his famous novel *Resurrection*, which he wrote at the end of the century when he was definitely set in all his social theories, Tolstoy himself appears in the character of Count Nehludof. "In scientific circles, Government institutions, and in the papers," the Count muses, "we talk about the causes of poverty among the people and the means of ameliorating their condition; but we do not talk of the only sure means which would certainly lighten their condition, namely, giving back to them the land they need so much. Henry George's fundamental position recurred vividly to Nehludof's mind. He remembered how he had once been carried away by it, and he was surprised that he could have forgotten it. 'The earth cannot be any one's property; it cannot be bought or sold any more than water, air, or sunshine. All have an equal right to the advantages it gives to men.' " ⁴

The difference in Tolstoy's treatment of the land question in *Resurrection* and that in *Anna Karenina* is that the peasants understood Nehludof's explanation and accepted his plan when he offered them his estates. In the earlier book the peasants were suspicious of the plan, and failed to respond to it; probably because Tolstoy himself was a bit vague about it, and had seen it fail on his own estate. In *Resurrection* he explains it this way, "As it would be difficult to say who should pay to whom, and as money is needed for communal use, it should be arranged that he who uses the good land should pay the value of that land to the commune for its needs. Then every one would share equally. If you want to use land, pay for it—more for the good land, less for the bad land. If you do not wish to use

⁴ Leo Tolstoy, *Resurrection*, New York (1927), Grosset and Dunlap, tr. by Louise Maude, p. 249.

land, don't pay anything, and those who use the land will pay the taxes and the communal expenses for you." ⁵ In following out this action the hero of *Resurrection* is considered a little mad, just as Tolstoy was thought when he attempted the same plan in his own life. "Rogozhinsky said that such an action was the height of inconsistency, flightiness, and pride,—the only possible explanation of which was the desire to appear original, to brag, and to be talked about." ⁶

References to Henry George and his system are to be found in almost every one of Tolstoy's later writings, and in his conversations it was one of the most frequent topics. In her book, *The Tragedy of Tolstoy*, his daughter, the Countess Alexandra, gives us intimate glimpses into these after-dinner conversations in the Russian household. Her father would push back from the table, comfortably cross his legs, and talk for hours on Henry George's land system and how it could be practically applied in Russia. The estate owner in the present condition of affairs could not afford to pay his taxes, but if the land were socialized the individual peasant who works with his own hands could easily pay his tax, especially if, as the system entails, all other taxes were abolished.⁷

Aylmer Maude, the intimate friend and biographer of Tolstoy, who lived in Russia over twenty years, records some interesting conversations with the old man over the question of poverty. In his work, *The Life of Tolstoy*, he writes that the Count often spoke of Henry George's single-tax system with approval, maintaining that such a

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 362.

⁷ Alexandra Tolstoy, *The Tragedy of Tolstoy*, New Haven (1933), Yale University Press, tr. by Elena Varneck, p. 173.

tax would amply suffice for all governmental expenses, even in Russia. But there was a seeming contradiction in Tolstoy's advocacy of an expansion of government function necessary to collect and spend the taxes, while at the same time he was forthright in condemning all government. To this Tolstoy answered that he was personally in favor of abolishing all government, but since most men still believe in government and legality, "let them, at least, see that they get good laws, and among the best possible laws would be the single tax." Maude objected that we could not progress in two contrary directions at one and the same time; we must work either for the abandonment of government or for its firmer and better organization. To this he replied in a manner that is delightfully and characteristically Russian. "What prevents voluntary payments to a voluntary administration?" The Count's faith in human nature knew no bounds.

* * *

The mention of a non-government society brings out the third of Tolstoy's contributions to the Russian acceptance of Marxian Idealism. It is his attitude on government and on the systems of those who would overthrow or change the Russian tsardom. Of like importance is his attitude towards the revolutionaries themselves, and towards the Greek Orthodox Church, as he interpreted its activities in Russia. Briefly, his stand may be summed up as follows: (*a*) abolition of both State and Church; (*b*) abolition of classes; that is, no distinction between rich and poor; (*c*) no physical violence of any kind must be used; (*d*) practice of non-resistance at all times.

The state of mind expressed in these points was developed by Tolstoy from the time of his "conversion" till his death. The first work, *What I Believe*, in 1883, and two others, *What Then Must We Do?*, and *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, during the next decade, contain practically the whole of his teaching on these points. Of government he wrote, "The governments of our day—all of them, the most despotic and the liberal alike—have become what Herzen so well called 'Ghengis Khan with the telegraph': that is to say, organizations of violence based on no principle but the grossest tyranny, and at the same time taking advantage of all the means invented by science for the peaceful collective social activity of free and equal men, used by them to enslave and oppress their fellows." And in the same work he continues, "The activity of governments, with their antiquated and merciless methods of punishment, their galleys, prisons, gallows and guillotines, so far below the general plane of morality, tends rather to lower the standard of morals than to elevate it, and therefore rather to increase than to lessen the number of criminals."

In his *What Then Must We Do?* Tolstoy links Church and State in the responsibility for a disordered society. "As in olden times, the subtleties of theology, which justified violence in church and state, were the special property of priests; and in the masses of the people, the conclusions, taken by faith, and ready-made for them, were circulated, that the power of kings, clergy, and nobility was sacred; so afterward the philosophical and legal subtleties of so-called science became the property of the priests of science, and through the masses only the ready-made conclusion, accepted by faith, that social order (the organization of

society) must be such as it is, and cannot be otherwise, was diffused." Tolstoy continues by joining together all those who live without work (work is manual, intellectual, and artistic—in that order): officials, priests and idle rich. "And so it appears that one class of men, who utilize the labor of others who perish by their labors, compensate for such an undoubted evil by an activity which is always considered by a great many men to be not only useless, but pernicious; which cannot be voluntarily accepted by men, but to which they must always be compelled, and the aim of which is not the benefit, but the personal advantage of those men who perform it."

This idea of an organizationless society is surprisingly in tune with Marx's original teaching of communism, though Marx seems to have been little more than a name to Tolstoy.⁸ He was in this sense an anarchist, and Gorky explains it thus: "What is called Tolstoy's 'anarchism' essentially and fundamentally expresses our Slav anti-Stateism, which, again, is really a national characteristic, ingrained in our flesh from old times, our desire to scatter nomadically. Up to now we have indulged that desire passionately, as you and every one else know. We Russians know it too, but we always break away along the line of least resistance; we see that this is pernicious, but still we crawl further and further away from one another."⁹ But, though he was in many respects an anarchist and a radical, Tolstoy saw that something must be done for the Russian peasant so that the old cleavage between the classes might be removed.

⁸ It is true that Tolstoy knew the doctrines of Marx. But he disagreed with him, especially on the matter of revolution, and on the historical causes which Marx thought were going to bring about a new society.

⁹ Gorky, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

He complained that even the workingman did not understand that rising from one class to the other would not solve the Russian problem. In speaking of the upper-class activities, Tolstoy says, "A workingman always looks at this activity with ill-will, and only ceases to look at it so when he ceases to be a workingman, and having saved money, and been educated, he passes out of the class of working-people into the class of men who live upon the necks of others." And his argument against the social-democratic state is somewhat similar when he says that the distribution of wealth and power will be succeeded by a gradual inequality because the distributors are just as human after as before. "They aren't going to invite the angels to come and attend to the distribution of wealth, are they? Equality will again not be obtained." And above all we must not encourage the revolutionaries. "One must preach to them and to their oppressors humane and pure Christian ideas. Only *that* can lighten and improve the condition of the people. And please don't be frightened at the word 'Christianity.' I mean nothing mystical, but simply the love of man by man: their brotherly, cordial relations. If all the energy of the patriots who preach the struggle for emancipation, were directed into that path, it would, in my opinion, be far better and more useful. I will go even further, and say that it is essential to follow that course."

In the *Kingdom of God Is Within You* he passes a further indictment on revolution. "Some persons maintain that freedom from violence, or at least a great diminution of it, may be gained by the oppressed forcibly overturning the oppressive government . . . but they deceive themselves . . . The oppressed would be another set of people, and coercion would take some new form. . ."

The Russo-Japanese War in 1905 was a particularly trying time for Tolstoy in his relations with revolutionists, and in the effect of his doctrine of non-resistance. Even while the Russians were in the midst of battle he was ceaselessly turning out propaganda against war. "It is as if there had never existed either Voltaire or Montaigne or Pascal or Swift or Kant or Spinoza or hundreds of other writers who have exposed, with great force, the madness and futility of war, and have described its cruelty, immorality, and savagery; and, above all, it is as if there had never existed Jesus and his teaching of human brotherhood, and love of God and of men." And the most horrible of all horrors to him was that human reason was impotent to prevent this war. An American newspaper asked at that time, "Whom does Tolstoy favor, Russians or Japanese?" to which the old man answered, "I am neither for Russia nor for Japan, but for the working people of both countries who are deceived and forced by their Government to go to war against their conscience, their religion and their own good." He said that the whole affair was amazing to him because "Christianity forbids killing, and so does Buddhism. And yet here are two peoples professing religions which forbid killing that are hatefully killing, drowning, and maiming each other."

The immediate result of his peace propaganda was that his activities were scrutinized more closely by the police so that Tolstoy and his community at Yasnaya Polyana had to be very careful about their so-called forbidden literature. Another effect was that the peasants who followed his advice and refused to take up arms and go to war were thrown into prison, sent to disciplinary battalions, flogged and tortured. The people were becoming restive, especially

in the urban centers, and Russian agitators saw that there was opportunity for a mass movement in the cities. Consequently there occurred in January of 1905 the people's peaceful march to the Winter Palace which ended in the killing of over five hundred and the wounding of three thousand workers, and of which Edmund Walsh says, "The Russian Revolution became inevitable when the first peaceful petitioner fell that Sunday afternoon before the Winter Palace."

More and more people asked Tolstoy his opinions on revolution, and his answer was always the same. Do not resist! The happenings of Red Sunday he blamed on the political agitators, the professional revolutionists, saying that they must have understood that the Tsar could not receive a delegation of fifteen thousand workers. "The crime committed at Petrograd is horrible. It is triply revolting: because the Government orders people to be killed, because the soldiers shoot their brethren, and because dishonest agitators, for their own base ends, lead simple people to death. I do not blame the people, but I have not enough words to express my aversion for those who deceive them."

The conservative element in Russia found fault with Tolstoy because he was a radical, and the radical element found fault with him because he did not advocate open revolution. His answer to both was, "What I stand for is God, and not government or liberals. People neglect the one and only thing in which they do have freedom of choice: their inner life. They keep planning how they would make others happy, but forget about their own spiritual life. Living as I do fortunately away from this struggle, I go on, in the very interests of the liberation of

humankind, preserving and developing my ideas which will be of use later, when their time comes."

* * *

The question remains now whether Tolstoy's teachings were really a conducive preparation for the Russian acceptance of the class struggle, and if so, whether his influence was wide enough to affect an entire people. The answer to the last question is easy. His writings were known throughout the whole civilized world, and his teaching within his own nation was so great that colonies of Tolstoyists sprang up all over Russia, and a large community gathered around him at his estate, to follow his precepts of living. The Doukhobors were converted to Tolstoyism, and probably followed his teachings more literally than any other group. For greater freedom of action more than fifteen hundred of them migrated to Canada, and Tolstoy helped them financially by donating to their new project all the proceeds from the sale of *Resurrection*.

Many of his writings were contraband in Russia, and this very fact gave them an added influence. As Maude writes, "There was in Russia no political liberty, no liberty of conscience, no freedom of the press, and no right of public meeting . . . (It is difficult for us to understand) . . . the interest and excitement then produced in Russia by the appearance of each new prohibited book dealing with a vital subject. Gatherings assembled in private houses to hear the forbidden book read aloud—and to discuss it; and books so read and so discussed had an immense influence."¹⁰ Thus the intelligentsia as well as the peasantry came under the spell of Tolstoyism.

¹⁰ Aylmer Maude, *The Life of Tolstoy*, London (1910), Constable, p. 383.

As for the teaching itself, there can be no doubt that it pointed to the leveling of all the people into one class, and that class the proletariat. Tolstoy took life in Russia as he found it, and he found it divided into two classes, the Haves and the Have-Nots. The Haves were those who lived without work; they were in the minority but had all the power. Men in his own position, and the nobles who followed his example, he classed with the Have-Nots because they were willing to work, and actually did the work of peasants. An excellent example of this is the character of Prince Bolkonsky in *War and Peace*, an aristocrat who follows closely the kind of life Tolstoy led at Yasnaya Polyana.

Tolstoy's doctrine of non-resistance had a fertile field in the mass of Russian peasantry. The agrarian workers in particular were already—and seemed to have been for ages—in an apathetic state where they cared nothing for progress. Almost anything would satisfy them as long as they were not obliged to bestir themselves in an unaccustomed manner. Tolstoy himself once remarked that “if one draws the poverty-line, as English writers do, at the point at which a man cannot purchase food enough to maintain himself and his family in full working efficiency, one must class the whole peasant population of Russia among the poverty-stricken.” They cared little for bettering their lot, and were suspicious of any one who offered them anything better. The spread of Tolstoy's teachings among them simply helped to make them putty in the hands of the men who seized the government in 1917, first Kerensky, then Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev. They were as unwilling as they were unable to resist.

Tolstoy's theory of education and his advocacy of

George's Single Tax system, were also influential in preparing for the proposed disappearance of class distinction in Russia. The first tended toward a spread of practical education for the workers, and the latter toward common ownership of all property by the workers. Even if he had planned the course of history for the twenty years after his death, Tolstoy could not have laid a more fitting foundation. And the irony of it is that he would be the last person in the world to condone the class struggle that finally took place in his country.

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE WEBBS

Sidney and Beatrice Webb (1860—)

WHAT ECONOMIC LIBERALISM MUST EVENTUATE IN communism is a thought which most people consider a paradox. We do not usually bother to take a paradox seriously, but in evaluating the social philosophy of the Webbs there is no choice in the matter. Apparent contradictions smoothly work themselves out to a logical conclusion. Full-grown communism is in first-cousin relationship to liberalism. It is the logical development of a *laissez-faire* system, and no dialectical demonstration proves it nearly as well as the tremendous literary output of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb.

The partnership of Beatrice and Sidney Webb, England's most famous socialists, is now in its forty-sixth year, and, judging from its present vitality and industry, should easily round out a half-century of close-knit effort. The feminine contribution to the firm's work is quickness and imagination, while the masculine side is represented by thorough and systematic orderliness. They were married in 1892 when he was thirty-three years old and she six months his senior; and since that time their collaboration has been so close that it is impossible to know their in-

dividual views on any given subject. Before their marriage, Beatrice (Potter) had published a book on the coöperative movement and several contributions to Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People*, while Sidney had edited the *Fabian Essays* and had contributed an important essay to that "most important single publication in British Socialism."

They were the children of families that had amassed fortunes in the British heyday of economic *laissez-faire*, but it is interesting to note of their earlier years that both envisioned social reform as a current necessity, she from the experienced social investigator's point of view, he from the theoretical socialist's stand. In the introduction to her partial autobiography entitled *My Apprenticeship*, Beatrice Webb anticipates her floundering about in the sea of social theory by asking a double question. "Can there be a science of social organization in the sense in which we have a science of mechanics or a science of chemistry? And, secondly, is man's capacity for scientific discovery the only faculty required for the reorganization of society according to an ideal, or do we need religion as well as science, emotional faith as well as intellectual curiosity?"

Eventually, she answered the first question affirmatively, and in the second question decided that religion was a hinderance to her goal.

In matters such as these Sidney Webb, in his early years, seems hardly to have been interested. He knew what he wanted; and to practise and publicize his objective he became one of the organizers of the famed Fabian Society in 1884. Part of his childhood had been spent in Switzerland and Germany, but his later education was somewhat piecemeal because financial reverses visited his family. At

the age of nineteen he started a thirteen-year period in the English civil service, mainly in the Colonial Office, during which time he managed to attend evening classes at the University of London, win a law degree and admittance to the bar. The year before his marriage he entered politics and was elected to the London County Council as a candidate endorsed by the Fabian Society.

A successful politician, Webb was reëlected four times during the next eighteen years and acted much of that time as chairman of the Technical Education Board. The other positions he held, ranging from a post in the Royal Commission on Trade-Union Law in 1903, to a seat in Parliament in 1922, and a place in the House of Lords in 1929, are too numerous to mention. His ennoblement and the title of Lord Passfield, which were necessary so that he could represent the Labor Party among the Lords, are so distasteful to him that he always prefers to be called "plain Sidney Webb." As for Beatrice Webb, she refuses to answer to the title of Lady Passfield, and rejects it because, as she says, she is "under no obligation to share in her husband's enforced ennoblement."

Sidney Webb's youthful approach to the philosophy of society and his constant preaching of the "inevitability of gradualness" in its development are apparent in his contribution to the *Fabian Essays* in 1889. He writes, "Owing mainly to the efforts of Comte, Darwin, and Herbert Spencer we can no longer think of the ideal society as an unchanging state. The social ideal from being static has become dynamic. The necessity of the constant growth and development of the social organism has become axiomatic. No philosopher now looks for anything but the gradual evolution of the new order from the old, without breach

of continuity or abrupt change of the entire social tissue at any point during the process." This belief in the "gradualism" of social improvement, and the unwisdom of abrupt change, runs through all the numerous works of the Webbs until the Russian five-year plans bewitched them into repudiating it in 1935 with their twelve-hundred page encomium entitled *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?*

* * *

When the Webbs began their social work and theory in England there were hardly any socialists, there was no political Labor Party, and least of all was there a thought of an English socialist upheaval. It is not that they were innovators of a system or in any degree original thinkers along economic lines. "We are both of us," Beatrice wrote in her diary, "second-rate minds; but we are curiously combined. I am the investigator and he the executant; between us we have a wide and varied experience of men and affairs. A considerable work should be the result if we use our combined talents with a deliberate and persistent purpose." They were a fact-finding couple who believed that an exact knowledge of the past supplies a guide to action in the future, and they set to work with enthusiastic determination, for, as she said later on, "Search after truth by the careful measurement of facts is the enthusiasm of my life."

Of course, no writer who has been as prolific as the Webbs can produce his works without leaning heavily on some influential sources of the past. No one is entirely the product of his own times, and the Webbs are no exception. For their passion for exactness and, to some degree, for

their evolutionary point of view, they are greatly indebted to Herbert Spencer, who was an intimate and highly valued friend of Beatrice Potter's mother. His scientific investigations and philosophic speculations greatly impressed the young girl and helped her to form an earth-bound opinion as to the object of social science. It is "to discover what is; not to tell us according to some social ideal what ought to be."

Herbert Spencer was a scientist, and thought himself a social philosopher, but he disclaimed formal socialism to such an extent that he relieved Beatrice of his literary executorship when he learned that she was to marry the Fabian, Sidney Webb. Despite this incident he remained a friend, a critic, and an influence to the Webbs till his death in 1903. Other immediate influences included Arnold Toynbee, Henry George's English critic, and Charles Booth from whom they learned much of their scientific method in acquiring data on the lives and labors of the working classes.

A more remote but equally potent influence on the Webbs was John Stuart Mill. The writings and opinions of Mill were a sort of inheritance to Sidney Webb from his father who was a confessed radical and an ardent admirer of Mill. Beatrice's connection was not quite as personal. Her father had been a capitalist, one of the mid-Victorian "captains of industry" and had bequeathed her very little in the way of social and economic solutions. But after Mill's death in 1873, she became avidly conscious of his *Autobiography* and his *Political Economy*, and accepted in full his definition of socialism: "The social problem of the future we consider to be, how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action, with a common ownership in

the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labor."

Sidney was somewhat eclectic in his choice of ideas from Mill, whose proposal for self-governing workshops was always disagreeable to the Webbs. He was, however, and still is, fully in accord with Mill's statement that the deepest root of the evils and iniquities of the industrial world is "the subjection of labour to capital, and the enormous share which the possessors of the instruments of production are able to take from the produce." Mill and the Webbs and, for that matter, few citizens of Protestant England ever scratched the surface deeply enough to discover the real root of evils and iniquities,—a thing called Original Sin.

A whole litany of other names helped the Webbs to form their judgment on social matters. A few of the better known are DeQuincey, Carlyle, Maurice, Kingsley, Ruskin, Comte, Darwin, Manning, and Marx. Of these perhaps the most important is Karl Marx, but they were at variance with some of his economic principles and did not greatly admire him until they had the opportunity, in the spring and summer of 1932, of visiting Russia and observing how Marxism had grown into Soviet communism. Beatrice herself could not accept Marx's theory of value, and, after brooding over it for some time, she published her own theory of value in an appendix to her autobiography.

There is one great factor that works sometimes favorably and at other times unfavorably in the formation of the Webbian social philosophy. This is their vaunted willingness to alter their viewpoint whenever changed conditions seem to them to warrant it. Being methodical and bookish

people, they were tremendously impressed by the intricate Soviet system of social planning as applied in the five-year plans. Their minds were as open as a wind-swept cavern, and as a result they have veered from their life-long advocacy of gradualism in social evolution.

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The Soviet experiment in careful book-keeping has thus made a vast impression on their present opinions. They traveled to the East, spent much time, labor, and money in indoctrinating themselves with Sovietism, and all the while they omitted to investigate the solid social philosophy of Catholicism, which has been growing stronger and more vocal from the time of Bishop Ketteler to the present. The Webbs have not been kind to Catholicism. Never were they greatly impressed with Christianity as a social institution, and in their later years they have come to the conclusion that theism of any kind is outmoded.

In the recapitulation of the second volume on communism, they point out that Russians have discontinued to practise rites and accept religious institutions because they are no longer believers; they have outgrown "any genuine faith in a personal deity who hears their prayers and governs alike the ocean and the earthquake, the harvest and the hearts of men.... No code of conduct professedly based on the supposed commands of an all-powerful ruler will outlast *the discovery that it has, in fact, no such foundation*" (italics added). In *Current History* for January, 1933, Sidney Webb had this to say regarding the liquidation of the Orthodox Greek Church, which he places in the same category with kulaks, landowners, and profit-making

employers: "When whole classes of persons continue to practice what is deemed to be seriously harmful to the community, the community has the right and the duty to suppress them." Here again Webb failed to get beyond the mere material aspect of society, and his groping for justification of injustice is pitiful.

It is not easy to discover what Sidney Webb's youthful views on Christianity were. Beatrice, on the other hand, kept a diary wherein she admits to "a search of a creed" and a guarded glance at Roman Catholicism. For the space of more than a dozen years there are occasional references to the "conflict" between the religion of science and the religion of faith, or, as she terms it, between the Ego that affirms and the Ego that denies. She confused emotionalism with a belief in the solid facts of Christianity.

Following are a few excerpts taken *passim* from her diary. "Sept. 13, 1877, Christianity certainly made one more egotistical...the ideal (that the new religion, science) presents to us is far higher than any presented by the great religions of the world. March 8, 1878, The religion of science has its dark side. It is bleak and dreary in sorrow and ill-health. And to those whose lives are one continual suffering it has but one word to say—suicide. March 31, 1878, I do not see that there is sufficient evidence, either for believing in a future life or in a personal creator of the universe.... I at present believe...that the idea of working out your own salvation, of doing good, and believing blindly, in order to arrive at eternal bliss, is, through its intense selfishness, an immoral doctrine."

An interest in the externals of Catholicism was awakened in her during a visit to Rome in 1880. Under date

of November 14 of that year her diary records, "I cannot write down what I felt on this Sunday morning—watching the silent Mass in St. Peter's . . . I tried afterwards to work out in my mind the theory of the Roman Catholic faith as it might be accepted by the agnostic. . . . The [Catholic] Church offers you the restoration of that harmony without which your life is aimless and incomplete. She declares herself to be the supreme reason. She does not ask you to interpret her; she provides her own interpreter in the priest, and suits her doctrine to the individual and the time. . . . Add to this the beautiful Catholic ritual, and the temptation to commit this intellectual (and perhaps moral) suicide is strong to one whose life without a religious faith is unbearable." Another incongruous thought that flitted through her mind about this time was that the Catholic Church would become an immense power "if it were only possible for the priesthood to be pure."

On February 2, 1881, her diary again turns to the possibility of conversion to Christianity. "It is impossible for a woman to live in agnosticism. That is a creed which is the product of only one side of our nature, the purely rational, and ought we persistently to refuse authority to that other faculty which George Eliot calls the emotive thought? . . . I suppose with most people it is the sense of what is morally untrue which first shakes your faith in Christianity; it is moral disapprobation of some of its dogmas which forces you to question rationally the rest. And this would be still more the case in an attempt to join the Catholic Church. You would be obliged to stifle your sense of what was right as well as that of what was true."¹

¹ These remarks are contained in Beatrice Webb's Ms. diary and are quoted by her in *My Apprenticeship*, pp. 93-9.

Strangely enough, she ends her chapter on the search of a creed by observing that during the decade between her mother's death and her own marriage it was *the habit of prayer* which enabled her to survive, "and to emerge relatively sound in body and sane in mind."

These quotations from Mrs. Webb's diary are not irrelevant for my present purpose. One cannot hope to investigate a person's social philosophy without trying to discover the metaphysical and religious speculations that are its base. The difficulty was that she did not extend her search for the ultimate truth till she found it. She did not know Catholicism or its social principles except as an emotional stimulus. For example, when she says that the Church suits her doctrine to the individual and the time, she has, like so many other moderns, a misapprehension of the nature of the Church's doctrines.

Again, in the matter of Christian charity she misinterprets the common Catholic practice of almsgiving. The Webbs have no use for either modern philanthropy or Christian charity; for them organization and a planned economy is everything, and they go so far as to quote approvingly Canon Burnett's remark that "the poor starve because of the alms they receive." In other words, Christian charity is indiscriminate and disorganized; and the more spontaneously generous it is the greater will be the number of mendicants and unemployed. There is not even a laudable purpose in it. For, according to them, it is, "to the orthodox Christian, not a process by which a given end could be attained, but an end in itself." In a footnote to this remark Beatrice writes, "This conception of almsgiving as an end in itself . . . seems still to be the predominant attitude of orthodox Roman Catholics, derived as it un-

doubtedly is from the teaching of the Fathers of the Church."

* * *

Penetrating these surface mistakes and differences of viewpoint we do not find it difficult to reach the source of Webbian error. This altering of opinion, this constant willingness to "evolve," must be laid at the door of one definite thing, the lack of a *fundamental philosophy*. Correct thinking must be based on a correct system of thought. Even Cicero, and he was a great mind, could not reach final consistency for the same reason.

However much they are basically awry, the Webbs are responsible for undoubted contributions to two important improvements in English social life, that of the laboring class as affected by trade unionism, and that of the general public as affected by consumers' coöperation.

The status of the English workingman has always been a large consideration in the studies of the Webbs. The first of their important essays in joint authorship was their *History of Trade-Unionism*, published in 1894, which showed that they were deeply curious about the very foundations of the labor movement they were trying to build up. In connection with this they soon set to work and published a series of nine volumes on local government history, four on its structure, and five on its function. Here was an opportunity to revel in statistics, and they made the most of it for their socialistic purposes. Besides a detailed treatment of labor conditions and prospects, these volumes deal with unemployment, penury, and prisons.

Another choice opportunity came their way when Mrs.

Webb was appointed to the Royal Commission on Poor Law and Unemployment, the result of which was the publication of their famous *Minority Report* of the Commission. After that they became the guardian angels of the British labor movement. At least their intellectual influence made itself felt, and grew steadily greater when Sidney Webb became Professor (without pay) of Public Administration at the London School of Economics and Political Science. In 1913 they helped to found the weekly *The New Statesman*, which gave them a frequent occasion to expand their social and economic theories.

From 1915 to 1925 Sidney Webb was an executive in the British Labor Party, and in 1924, two years after his election to Parliament, he was named President of the Board of Trade in the Labor Government.

Mrs. Webb was not entirely indebted to her husband for her interest in and work for British labor. In the course of twenty years, and in the span of three hundred and fifty pages of her life story, she achieved a complete reversal in her attitude toward labor. Back in the bosom of her liberal household she thought of labor, when she thought of it at all, as an abstraction "which seemed to denote an arithmetically calculable mass of human beings, each individual a repetition of the other." Then came personal investigations of the seamy side of life in London where she often had to struggle through "an East End crowd of the wrecks, waifs and strays of this civilization." After her father's death came what she thought the true solution for the workingman. "I dimly see," she wrote, "the tendency towards a socialist community, in which there will be individual freedom and public property, instead of class slavery and private possession of the means

of subsistence of the whole people. At last I am socialist!" The first step of the metamorphosis: the liberal becomes a socialist.

But, though she willingly joined them, everything was not harmonious within the socialist ranks at that time, especially in the matter of trade unions. Three years after the history of that movement appeared, as Sidney tells it, a "comprehensive analysis of the whole structure and function of the workingmen's organizations entitled *Industrial Democracy*, effectively brought the Trade-Union Movement into our common consciousness." It was published at a time (1897) when other socialists were looking askance at the movement as reactionary because it was a mere "aristocracy of skilled workers" shut up within the ideology of the wage system.

There were other rifts between the right and left wings of socialism, and it must be said to the credit of the Webbs, that they were always on the side of *legislation* to end unemployment and raise the status of the laborer. They were rather alone in this trend, for it was a commonly held contention forty years ago, not only among socialists but also among ordinary economists and politicians, that unemployment could not in practice be prevented under any system "short of a completely organized Collectivism." They strove to show the fallacy in this assumption, and pointed it out in their volume entitled *Towards Social Democracy*, a history of the evolution of democracy from 1840 to 1914, and also in the introduction to the 1920 edition of *Fabian Essays*.

Another matter in which they were on the right side was the conclusive historical proof that the so-called "self-governing workshops" were impracticable. Many had ap-

proved this control by the workers of their own shops on the grounds that it promoted the spirit of Christian fellowship, or that it stimulated their pecuniary self-interest, but the Webbs bluntly stated that "the ideal of the control of industry by the workers concerned had the supreme demerit *that it would not work*." They demonstrated that the system was impracticable because it hinged upon the crucial point of Marxian economic philosophy. Like all schemes founded upon a false principle, the self-governing workshop had to fail. For it was rooted in the commonly held theory, which Karl Marx had accepted from David Ricardo, Thompson, and Hodgskin, namely, that "Labor is the only source of Value."

* * *

If the self-governing workshops could not succeed because they were based on the false theory of Marx and his predecessors, whither could labor turn for that control of industry which the Webbs thought necessary for their welfare? The answer was simple. The millennium could be reached through two agencies, first, a powerful trade union movement, and secondly, consumers' coöperation. It was Beatrice who discovered and made an objective study of the coöperatives in England; in fact it was while working on this subject that she first met Sidney, who stepped in and collaborated at least to the extent of shaping the mass of material she had collected. That was in 1891. In 1921 they brought out an entirely revised and up to date edition, a thorough history of what they considered the real British socialism.

Of all socialist thinkers the Webbs alone were candid

groupings, associated for the purchase of household requisites, to the obligatory association of all the residents of a city, for every civic purpose." And that is the socialist ideal.

* * *

In this matter of forcing people to comply to socialist principle and practice, it is worth noting the difference between Marxism and Fabianism. Strictly speaking, the one is revolutionary, the other merely evolutionary. In 1895, Engels looked over the socialist situation in England, and remarked, "I have finally come to the conviction that English workingmen entertain no thought of putting an end to capitalist production, their only endeavor being to make the most of their actual situation." At that time his statement was for the most part true, but since then the Webbs have been the main factor in the growing demand of labor for a better share in the fruits of production.

In theory, the differences between Marxian and Fabian Socialism are a matter of means rather than of ends. The theoretical character of the ideal socialist state is fundamentally the same, but according to Marxism it must come about through violence and revolution; according to Fabianism, as expressed by Sidney Webb, it can come about only through a change that is (a) *democratic*, and thus acceptable to a majority of the people; (b) *gradual*, thus causing no violent dislocation; (c) *not regarded as immoral* by the mass of the people; (d) *constitutional and peaceful*.²

² These four points were made by Sidney Webb in the *Fabian Essays*, published in 1889. They reappeared in the 1920 edition, showing that he retained them until a few years ago. After the Russian trip he abandoned them completely.

However, a comparison between the Webbs and Marx must have an historical analysis deeper than this. The Englishman came from a very different economic and political tradition—from liberalism, and then Mill and Jevons and Bentham and the apostles of the utilitarian doctrine. This doctrine was one to which even gloomy Malthus contributed; it is expressed in the catchphrase “the greatest happiness to the greatest number,” and passed from an insistence on individualism and *laissez-faire* to a kind of socialism that was made up of specific social reforms. It was not particularly urgent in reaching the ideal state because it had combined utilitarianism with a profound belief in an inevitable social evolution. Whether men helped it or hindered it, capitalism must eventuate in socialism.

Karl Marx, too, held this doctrine of evolutionary process in society with as firm a conviction as the Webbs. But Marx was proceeding under the influence of an intellectual dialectic, after the manner of Hegel, and he envisioned the arrival of the socialist ideal mainly by a succession of class struggles and to the accompaniment of recurring social revolutions. The rulers had to be overthrown and the capitalists had to be liquidated. Marx came to this conclusion mainly because he was familiar with the traditional monarchies of continental Europe where not even parliamentary democracies, much less socialist representation, had made any progress.

In the spirit of their pacific policies, the Webbs wrote *A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain* in which they worked out their theories “on a basis of persuasion rather than of force,” and brought out what they termed the principles of “measurement and publicity.”

Stalin and his associates are in perfect accord with the Webbian principle of a scrupulous *measurement* of the efficiency of the socialized system. It is in practice the constant check and re-check of the five-year plans. But the dictum on *publicity*, which "implies an unrestrained freedom of criticism, not only of the sectional efficiency of this or that particular organ of the socialist economy, but also of the socialist system as a whole," is quite another matter. That is too liberal a principle to fit in with current Bolshevism.

* * *

Returning to the statement which opened this chapter, it is enlightening to find that a list of six Webb books, arranged in chronological order as they were written, shows a surprising aptness for proving that liberalism must eventuate in communism. In his work, *The Political Doctrine of Fascism*, Alfred Rocco wrote, "It is evident that Socialism contains and surpasses Democracy in the same way that Democracy comprises and surpasses Liberalism, being a more advanced development of the same fundamental concept. Socialism in its turn generates the still more extreme doctrine of Bolshevism which demands the violent suppression of the holders of capital, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as means for a fairer economic organization of society and for the rescue of the laboring classes from capitalistic exploitation." The order of the Webbian writings showing this evolution is *The Coöperative Movement*, *Towards Social Democracy?*, *Industrial Democracy*, *The Decay of Capitalist Civilization*, *A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth*, and finally, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?*

Thus, from the liberalism of the last century they have worked up to the peak of modern collectivism, and have put their stamp of approval on the dictatorship of the proletariat. Remembering their willingness to alter their point of view, we can easily understand how the Webbs have at last succumbed to the materialistic conception of history as established by Marx and Engels. A study of their last book, and of Sidney Webb's more recent periodical articles, will show that they profess these four simple tenets, the basis of communistic theory of history: (*a*) There is no dualism of spirit and matter; (*b*) The social relations and institutions of man are not immutable; everything is subject to a constant process of change; (*c*) In this process of change, production and the exchange of products are the determining and decisive factors; (*d*) Social development is brought about by economic contrasts and class struggles.

With these premises established, what of the future? Will the "new" civilization endure? Is it really a new civilization? There can be no doubt about the Webbs' affirmative answer, for near the end of the first volume on Russia (p. 450), they write, "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics does not consist of a government and a people confronting each other, as all other great societies have hitherto been. It is a highly integrated social organization in which, over a vast area, each individual man, woman or youth is expected to participate in three separate capacities: as a citizen, as a producer, and as a consumer." This is indeed fulsome praise of a system which, as we know from unbiased reporters, is anything but "highly integrated."

Another principle they deemed it wise to alter is that of democratic representation. From their first joint writings the Webbs displayed an enthusiasm for democratic govern-

ing by the largest number of citizens for the benefit of all the citizens. They were especially partial to the laboring masses, but they were also fairly consistent in their contention that government should be in behalf of all the community, and that all persons should be represented in the governing. After their Russian study they freely admit and appreciate that the following persons have "neither the right to vote nor the right to be elected": (*a*) those employing labor for profit; (*b*) those living on income not derived from their own labor; (*c*) private businessmen and trade commercial agents; (*d*) monks and clergymen of all religious denominations; (*e*) employees, agents, and members of the former police and ruling dynasty of Russia.

In final summation of their opinions on Soviet civilization, the Webbs repeat and approve what they call the "eight principal novelties" of the U.S.S.R. They place first in far-reaching importance the complete *discarding of the profit motive*. They endorse unequivocally as an indispensable factor the deliberate *planning of the production* of commodities and services. To them the whole social organization of Soviet communism is based upon a *social equality* that is more genuine and more universal than has existed in any other community. So too with the Russian representative system in which "the franchise is the widest in the world . . . whilst the extent to which the entire population actually participates in elections is without parallel." They naïvely praise the Russian *vocation of leadership* (*sic*) without which democracy is but a mob, and write that "the function of affording to the population the necessary guidance of public affairs is assumed by a voluntary but highly organized and strictly disciplined Vocation of Leadership, which calls itself the Communist Party."

The sixth novelty is the *cult of science*, which is the professed faith of the administrators in the Moscow Kremlin. The next novelty, *anti-Godism*, they attempt to explain away by saying that it is part of the colossal task of raising the backward people of the U.S.S.R. to a higher level of civilization. Finally, there is the *emergence of a communist conscience* which shows that there is a purpose in man's effort "involving a conception of right and wrong to be embodied in the Good Life." The morality, or ethical code, is staked on science "as interpreted dialectically, to the exclusion of any miraculous supernaturalism or mystical faith in the persistence of personal life after death. The Worship of God is replaced by the Service of Man."

It has been a long journey of almost fifty years, this road from liberalism to Bolshevism, with all its varied stages and stopping-places along the way. It demonstrates clearly the one Webbian source of error that is the basis of both *extremes*. It shows that the *via media* of social philosophy can be founded only on our Catholic philosophical concepts. All others lead us into the maze of sociological bastardy.

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